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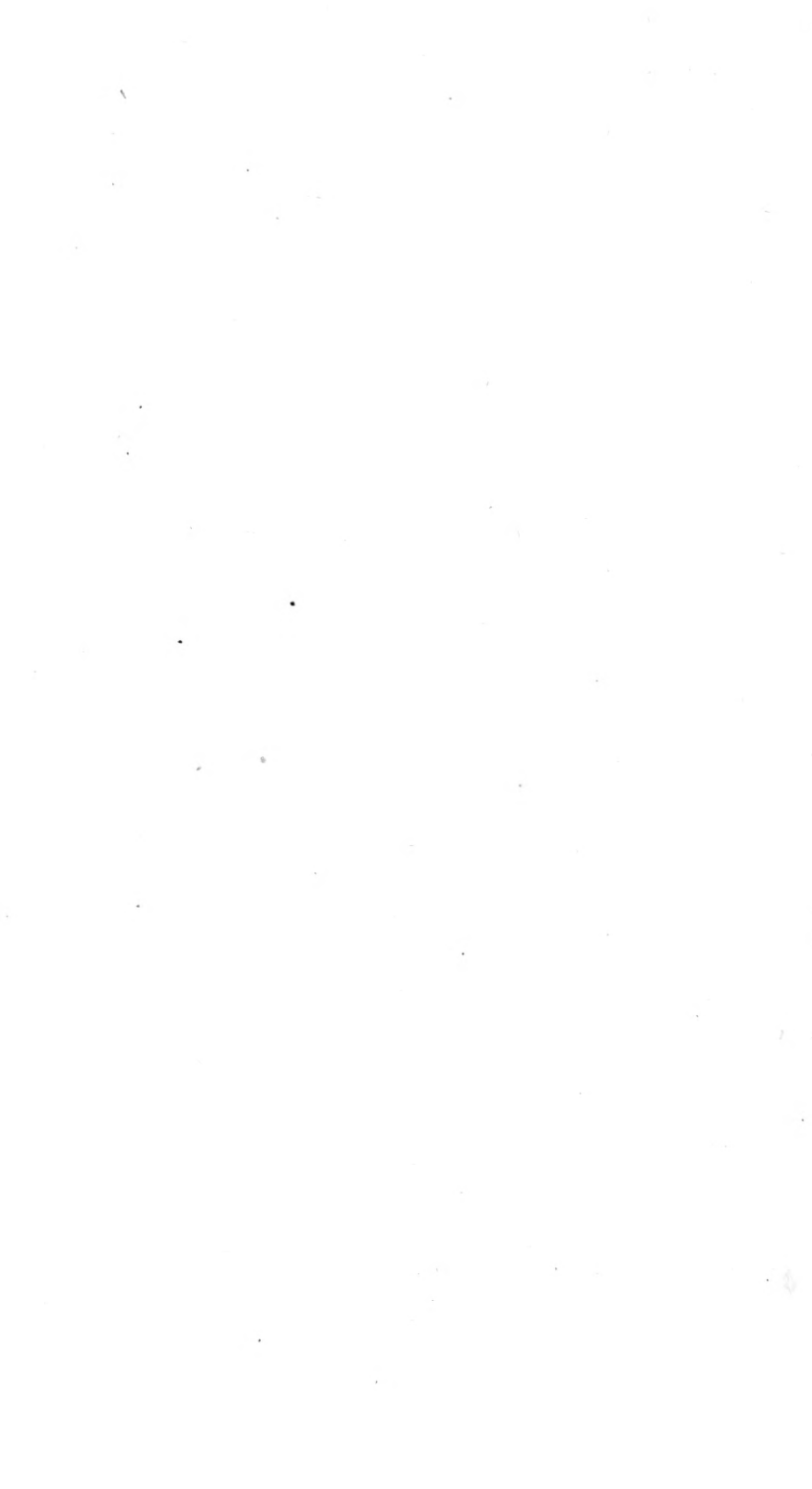












THE  
ENGLISH BROTHERS;

OR,  
*ANECDOTES*

OF THE  
HOWARD FAMILY.

---

*IN FOUR VOLUMES.*

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Sogni, e favole, io fingo.

——And give to airy nothing,  
A local habitation, and a name. SHAKESPEARE.

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VOL. III.

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THE  
ENGLISH BROTHERS.

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CHAP. XXIII.

“ My sighs arise with the beam of the east, my tears descend with the dews of the night.”

SCARCELY had the dappled morning appeared in the east, when the miserable Lord William left his bed ; he had passed a restless night, and believing that the fresh and fragrant air, and a walk in the grounds, would relieve the heat and languor that oppressed him, he dressed hastily, and descending the stairs, found one of the domestics, who shewed him the way into the grounds : having wandered some time through them, he took the path that led to the village, where

they had met Miss Howard, her friend, and Lord Ravensworth. In passing by the skirt of the meadow, he saw the ruined abbey on the rising ground, and happening at the moment to meet the cottager that had the care of it, he asked him what it was; the man answered, "A bit of an old ruin of a place that monks and nuns used to live in years ago; no one ever took any notice of it but the ladies of Rosefield; and the pretty young one is so fond of it," said he, "that she will sit there the livelong morning, playing on her instrument so sweetly, that I ne'er can do any work when I hear her, but stand leaning on the stile there like a fool till the music is over."—"Who is it that pleases you so much?" asked Lord William; "for there are two young ladies at Rosefield."—"Sometimes there are two," replied the cottager. "Squire Westburn's daughter is good, and pretty too, but not



the one I mean ; it's Miss Howard that sings and plays in the cloister."—" In the cloister ? does she go there to sing ?"

—" O yes, that she does, and her voice is sweeter than any nightingale's."

—" And does she come there alone ?"

—" She often comes alone ; but yesterday, when all the great folks drove into the village, she and the other young lady, and Lord Ravensworth, were just come from the hill ; but it is no wonder she should sing and play for a person she is so soon to be married to."—" To be married to Lord Ravensworth !" cried Lord William, starting. " Is it possible ?"

—" Indeed I believe so, Sir ; his servants give out so, and say he is a-dying for love of her ; and I am sure I don't wonder for my part if he be. They are to have great doings to-morrow night at the Lord's house ; they say he gives a ball, that the whole country may see the beautiful creature, and it is to her en-

tirely he gives it: he is a fine good man, and very generous indeed; he gave me a power of money for sliewing him where his sweetheart was."—"And where was she?" asked Lord William. "That I will shew you too," answered the cottager, and led the way to the old abbey.

Lord William followed, scarcely able to support himself. He was shocked to death: was Caroline to be the wife of Lord Ravensworth? was she lost, not only to him, but to his brother? was she so soon captivated, so soon won? In the most violent agitation, he mechanically followed the cottager, and entering the cloister, threw himself on one of the seats that had been placed there. The man stood pointing out the beauties of the prospect, which he had not the power to discern or enjoy; and he was lost in sorrow, while his guide ran on telling him the news of the country. At

last Lord William, wishing to be alone, gave him some money, saying, he could easily find his way back, and would not detain him longer. "By my faith," said the man, taking the money, and looking at it with delight, "you are as generous, Sir; as the Lord I have been telling you of." Then making a rustic bow, he departed.

Lord William, left to himself, gave free vent to his feelings in sighs and tears; he flattered himself that his grief was chiefly on his brother's account; then reflecting that his only authority for all he had heard was merely a simple cottager, he was tempted to doubt the truth of the story. He ran over in his mind all that had passed since he was first acquainted with Caroline: if she had ever appeared to notice any one with the least regard, he thought (though almost afraid to do so) it was himself. The fascinating Fitzroy had been dis-

carded. She treated the Marquis only as a friend ; and could she so soon single out Lord Ravensworth to bestow that heart on, when so many others, as amiable as he was, had sighed for it in vain ? Looking round, and finding himself alone, he said aloud, “ Why, why should I thus torment myself ? Is she not lost to me ? Do not honour, friendship, fraternal affection, preclude all possibility of my attempting to make an interest in her heart ? Shall I not escape daily misery, by her being at once removed to a distance from me ? If I see her the wife of my brother, it will be a continual wretchedness that I must fly from ; I must lose him as well as Caroline, and Heaven knows they are to me the two dearest objects on earth. I have sacrificed my happiness to Frederick.” Here sighs and tears would again have vent, and they relieved his full heart. At last, ashamed of his weakness, he

rose from his seat, looked round, and was surprised at the beautiful scenery presented to his view. The sun was now risen ; all nature rejoiced, and paid homage to its great Creator. The birds,

“ That, singing, up to heaven’s gate ascend,  
Bore on their wings, and in their notes, his praise.”

Lord William for a length of time contemplated the scene before him. The softness of the morning, the fresh breeze that blew from the sea, helped to calm the perturbation of his mind : he determined not to mention to his brother what he had heard ; to avoid, if possible, any private conversation with Miss Howard ; to assume a cheerfulness foreign to his heart, and to dress his face in smiles, while within a vulture was devouring him. Having examined the ruins, admired the beautiful plants that were arranged with so much taste, and beheld with delight the various and

lovely views from different parts of the cloister, he found, if he loitered there much longer, he should scarcely have time to prepare for breakfast. Descending to the cottage through the meadow, he saw the door open, and the man who had shewn him to the abbey standing at it. Lord William went in, merely to have the pleasure of looking at Caroline's harp and music-books, which his guide had told him she always left in his care; they were placed in a little neat room, the door of which being open, he perceived them on entering the cottage. He took up the books, and turned over the well-known songs he had so often sung with her. Seeing the harp had some knots of riband attached to it, he took one off unperceived (he supposed) by the cottager, and placed it in his bosom, valuing it as a pilgrim would a relic he had travelled over half the globe to obtain.

Gentle reader, if thou art young, thou wilt pity Lord William, and perhaps sigh for such a lover : if advanced in life, laugh not at his weakness, lest we suspect,

“ Thou didst then ne’er love so heartily :  
If thou remember’st not the slightest folly  
That ever love did make thee run into,  
Thou hast not lov’d.”

Lord William, giving the cottager half-a-crown, took the road to Rosefield, entered the house and his own apartment without seeing a soul, and intending not to speak of his morning’s walk, dressed, and went to the breakfast-room. In a few minutes all were assembled ; and before they sat down, Lord Ravensworth made one of the company. The breakfast was gay ; the young people seemed in high spirits ; Caroline, piqued extremely by the coldness and distance of Lord William, was now acting a part

which deceived every eye but the penetrating one of Mr. Lindsey, who congratulated himself on reading her heart, but was careful to conceal from Lord William his knowledge of it, till he saw how matters might turn out. He would have given no credence to the report of the cottager, had it been made to him ; but love is blind, and oftentimes it is fortunate it is so.

But to my story. Lord Ravensworth had come to Rosefield to attend the gentlemen back to his own house. Lady Gertrude said, if he did not look on it an intrusion, the ladies should like to be of the party. The Earl was highly flattered, the carriages were ordered, and they agreed to call for Mr. and Mrs. Westburn as they passed their gate. The Marquis never left Caroline's side. Lord Ravensworth, under the necessity of paying attention to all, could not gratify his own wishes in a way to please him.



Driving and walking through his fine grounds occupied some hours; when they came to the house, he told his guests an early dinner was prepared, and requested them to partake of it. Lord Ravensworth was too earnest in his entreaties to be denied. The house was fitting up for the next night's entertainment, and with ease and gaiety he carried them through all the rooms. Lady Gertrude was surprised at seeing what an elegant house he had made of his old gloomy mansion, and begged him, in remembrance of his mother, whom she had loved, to allow of her visiting her apartments. Lord Ravensworth, in escorting her to them, gratified Lady Gertrude and himself at the same time. They were extremely handsome, though not in a modern style, but every thing was commodious, and suited to a person of rank. A full-length picture of the Countess hung in the dressing-room,

and every one admired the extreme beauty of the face and figure. "I have sometimes thought," said the Earl, "that about the eyes it resembles Miss Howard." Most of the company agreed in thinking so; and he continued, "I have only hung it here till my house is completed, lest it might receive any damage; it shall soon occupy the chief place in my drawing-room."

Caroline whispered Miss Westburn, "You, my sweet friend, will, I hope, at no distant day, occupy those apartments, and the first place in this mansion; not as a picture, but an animated and happy being."—"Don't let mortal hear you," cried Catherine, affectionately pressing her arm, and blushing.

If the breakfast at Rosefield was gay, the dinner at the Grove was much more so. Lord Ravensworth's cheerfulness inspired his guests, and all was apparently unaffected pleasure.

As we strictly adhere to truth, and do not wish to impose our heroine for a more perfect being than is to be found in human nature, we must own, that she this day sweetly smiled, both on Lord Ravensworth and the Marquis ; she received their attentions with seeming pleasure ; she encouraged both, and yet avoided giving offence to either. Unhappy Caroline ! we must forgive this single act of coquetry, so foreign to your nature, and the adoption of it for a while, forced upon you by the wish to probe a heart dearer to you than all the world ; your own at the moment lacerated by fear, anger, tenderness, resentment, and a feeling like despair. If she looked at Lord William, she threw into her eyes as much coldness and disdain as she could command : she did not succeed as well as she believed ; her looks gave him pain, but he was conscious of deserving them, and well knew that

his wavering strange conduct must have placed him in a contemptible light to the only woman on earth he was anxious should see him in a favourable one ; he bore her behaviour with calmness, and that calmness disconcerted her.

When evening came, Lord Ravensworth declared he could not part with his friends so soon. “ You shall stay,” cried he, “ till eleven o’clock ; if you do not, I shall suppose you dislike the confusion my house is in.” They all declared their time had been so agreeably passed, they began to suspect, when his grand entertainment came, they should regret the pleasures of the present day, spent with so much ease and freedom. The Duke expressed his wish to remain, and Lady Gertrude instantly consented. The Westburns were agreeable, animated people, polite without form. Mr. Westburn was entertaining and witty to a great degree. With such a company,

conversation can never languish. When coffee was brought, they were surprised at hearing a very fine band of music in the great hall. The hospitable owner of the mansion said, the musicians were choosing their situation in different parts of the house, and rehearsing for the next night. "We should do well to rehearse too," cried he, ringing the bell, and ordering some lights to be placed in the ball-room. They then found there were too few to do more than dance reels. Catherine was quite happy; she looked so. On the first movement, the Marquis took Caroline's hand to lead her to the ball-room, just as Lord Ravensworth approached to do the same; he perceived it, and instantly gave his to the gay Catherine. The five young people took it in turn to keep up the reel, and Miss Howard anxiously avoided being in the set at the same time with Lord William. She could not always do

so ; and coming close to her, he said, “ O Miss Howard, I too plainly see how very low I am in your opinion, and yet one day you may be sorry for having thought so severely of a miserable man.”

Caroline had no time, nor had she the power, to reply ; she lifted her eyes to Lord William, and saw his swimming in tears : her coldness, her anger was past, and she unconsciously gave him a look of unutterable tenderness. She was quite overcome ; she stopped suddenly in the dance, and if the Marquis had not at that moment approached, and supported her, she must have fallen to the ground. Her cheek glowed, and tears trickled from her eyes. “ Heavens !” cried Lord Beaumont, “ what is the matter with you ?”—“ Nothing, nothing but my foot ; I made a false step, and suffer violent pain from it, which will soon be over.” This *ruse* fortunately presented itself ; she was instantly sur-

rounded by the whole group, and the Marquis almost carried her to a seat. Lord Ravensworth flew for a glass of water; and Mr. Lindsey, seeing the whole from the beginning, took Lord William under the arm, and drew him aside, fearful of an eclairsissement. All however passed off; Miss Howard in a few minutes declared the pain she had felt was completely over, and she would soon be able to resume the dance: she would have done any thing to free herself from Lord Beaumont; he was so anxious, so agitated, and said so many things she did not wish to hear from his mouth, that, rising from the seat he had placed her in, and seeing her mother near, she put her arm through hers, and asked her to walk with her through the rooms. “If you can walk, Caroline, you had best do so, for to-morrow night we shall pay little attention to any decorations but our own.”—“You will

pay me a bad compliment then," said Lord Ravensworth, smiling, "as I assure you I have taken some trouble to ornament this old place; but you ladies are horribly ungrateful to our sex, who live but in your smiles."—"Is that your real opinion?" asked Catherine archly; "and do you not believe there is as much ingratitude in man, as you can accuse us poor females of?" These words, and the sort of look that accompanied them, a mixture of gaiety and timidity, struck Lord Ravensworth; his cheek flushed, he felt confused, and knew not what to answer, when a servant throwing open a large folding-door in one of the state apartments, a magnificent room was discovered, ornamented for the next night. At one end there was a comfortable fire, a number of lights, and a small supper-table laid out with the greatest elegance; and Lord Ravensworth taking Catherine's hand,



instead of answering her, led her into the room. Lady Gertrude declared she believed Lord Ravensworth kept an enchanter in pay; she could not but be astonished to find the old gloomy mansion turned into a fairy palace. The Earl answered, it would be impossible to live in the intimacy he did with her family and Westburn's, and not acquire a degree of taste. The company then sat down to the supper-table, and their amiable host "gaily pressed and smiled," and did the honours of his house with a grace peculiar to himself; and the cheerfulness of the party seemed to be so great, that no human eye could have discerned through the gay disguise the secret sorrow that corroded the hearts of the younger part of the group. Love, jealousy, fear, and resentment, were also guests at the festive board, and defied wisdom to banish them.

When the repast was at an end, Lord

Ravensworth proposed catches and glees. Some of the musicians belonging to the band were admitted, who sang and played charmingly. The Duke then requested Miss Howard to sing some of the duets and trios he had heard her sing with his sons : she excused herself, as not having the music before her ; the objection was obviated, by its being in the house and instantly produced, and she found it impossible to avoid what she so much dreaded, singing with Lord William. He was almost as fearful of not being able to command his feelings, as was poor Caroline, who was now obliged to take her seat between the brothers. Sweetly did they sing, and highly gratifying was the performance to their hearers, but painful in the extreme to the unfortunate lovers. All the happy hours they had passed together in the parlour of the convent, at the villa near Naples, their little concerts at the end of the

terrace, rushed forcibly upon memory, and gave a pathos and expression to their voices beyond belief. In the beginning it was a painful task ; as they proceeded, they found a melancholy pleasure that almost rewarded their sufferings.

Lord Ravensworth, leaning his elbow on the table, and his cheek on his hand, was all eye, all ear ; he looked earnestly at Miss Howard ; he had penetration, and he suspected what passed in her heart ; it made him very serious for some time, but he recovered his composure, and joined in the general applause. About eleven the company broke up ; the Duke was in high spirits, and, on rising from table, filled a glass of wine to their worthy host, saying,

“ If these pleasures thou canst give,  
Mirth, with thee I choose to live.”

The carriages being announced, Lord Ravensworth, taking Miss Howard's

hand, led her to hers, saying, "I thank you for the delightful entertainment you have given me, and I hope you will not forget your engagement for the first set to-morrow." She replied, "Certainly not;" he bowed, placed her in the carriage, and then handed in Catherine. We know not from what cause, but he certainly pressed her fair hand as he wished her a good night, and that single pressure conveyed a thousand agreeable sensations to her innocent bosom. She was perfectly silent on their way to Rosefield, so was Caroline, who could admit no thought but of Lord William, and she knew not what to make of his extraordinary speech. Why was he miserable, when happiness or misery seemed to depend on himself? "O!" thought she, "caprice and fastidiousness can make any one miserable; I will cease to be angry with him in pity to his weakness." Yet again she mentally said, "He looks

shockingly ; there can be no deceit in that ; his voice often trembled while he sang, and as by chance his hand touched mine, I felt it shake. Poor Lord William ! if you have any cause to be unhappy, I never shall forgive myself for my severe judgment. O Lord William ! can you be unhappy, and Caroline Howard not feel for you ?" These thoughts entirely occupied her, till the coach stopped at Rosefield, where we shall leave the young friends, wishing them agreeable dreams, and take ourself some moments of repose, as to-morrow must be a day of hurry.

## CHAP. XXIV.

"In peace Love tunes the shepherd's reed,  
 In war he mounts the warrior's steed;  
 In halls in gay attire is seen;  
 In hamlets dances on the green.  
 Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,  
 And men below, and saints above."

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL,

BEFORE we proceed farther, we must take a view of what was passing in the mind of the Marquis: he was much in love with Miss Howard, and flattered himself he should be a successful lover. My fair readers will very naturally ask, why he has not already made his proposals? We answer, a degree of prudence, and his own good sense, prevented him; his love was not less ardent for the delay. Lord Beaumont

knew on his return from abroad that Lady Emily was destined for his bride : this alarmed him exceedingly ; he had high notions of filial duty and affection, but was determined not to sacrifice his happiness to any consideration whatever. He was desirous of putting an end to any expectation Lady Emily might have, without wounding her delicacy, and to gain his father's and mother's approbation of his addresses to Miss Howard. He well knew the Duchess's pride and desire of accumulating riches in her family ; and as Miss Howard's fortune was supposed very small, it was almost certain Her Grace would throw every impediment in the way of such a match. He also knew the pride of the Howards, and that they might perhaps entirely reject him, if every thing did not run smooth. When he found his cousin Lady Emily as little inclined as he was to an union, he was completely happy,

and the delusions of hope flattered him with perfect bliss ; his love and his ardent temper assisted the deceit. Blind to his brother's passion, seeing no rival near, and Fitzroy being rejected, filled him with confidence ; and when he was in Kent, he took an opportunity of disclosing the secret of his heart to his father, and beseeching him to bring about matters with his mother, so as to reconcile her to the match he wished to make, and to the giving up Lady Emily. He informed the Duke, that he had come to an explanation with his cousin, who was determined on not acquiescing in her aunt's schemes, as her heart was otherwise engaged.

The Duke listened with great kindness to his son ; he could not wonder at his attachment to Miss Howard ; for of all beings he himself admired her the most : but he was astonished to find that Lady Emily had given her affections to an unknown.



He questioned Lord Beaumont on the subject, who declared his ignorance, saying, he did not think it would have been delicate in him to force her confidence; he was particularly happy she had not thrown away her heart on him. "My dear boy," cried the Duke, "I have somehow been prepared for the avowal of your secret; I could not be blind to your constant attention to the charming Caroline, and cannot be surprised at the preference you give her. I should have felt hurt, had Emily been a rejected maiden; and had it been so, I could not answer for what your mother might say or do; as it is, no blame can attach to you, and I shall smooth your way as well as lies in my power. You know I do not look for fortune with your wife; I prize happiness above riches, and thank Heaven I have enough for you and your brother, and have no wish, but to do all that can tend to the felicity

of my children." Nothing could exceed the gratitude of the Marquis to so good and kind a parent ; and it was agreed between them, to delay making absolute proposals to Miss Howard, till they got to London. "We shall all soon be there," said the Duke ; " my dear Frederick, pay what attention you please to the lovely girl, but do not let matters be publicly known till I have reconciled your mother to this business ; she would not forgive being set aside, I am convinced."

The Marquis saw the propriety of his father's conduct, and was satisfied. Lord William was his only confidant. "Fatal confidence !" thought Lord William : " how terrible is my fate ! that the sweet brotherly affection that subsists between us, should prove to me the source of woe !" The kind Duke had taken the journey into Hampshire from the wish to indulge one son, and to restore the other's health.

But who can say what will give pleasure or distress to the human mind? Lord Beaumont, on his arrival at Rosefield, found a strong counterpoise to the gratification of again being near Caroline; he found her the first day of his visit in company with Lord Ravensworth, receiving from him every attention he could pay. He soon recognised the lover; whether a favoured one or not, he was yet to learn. Miss Howard seemed neither to wish for nor reject his assiduities; and Lord Beaumont feared to offend or hurt her, by shewing the jealousy he felt; for Lord Ravensworth was not a rival to be despised, and had something so noble and amiable in his manners, that the Marquis could not hate him, though provoked when Caroline shewed him the smallest civility.

The morning of the ball, the party at Rosefield were assembled in Lady Gertrude's dressing-room, talking over the

last agreeable day. “No I doubt,” said the Duke, “whether we shall find to-night as pleasant as yesterday; unexpected gratifications are always the greatest.” Lady Gertrude proposed a walk, as the day was particularly delightful. “I must shew you, Duke, the convent; Caroline is so fond of it, that I have made her mother abbess of it.” None of the guests had seen the ruins but Lord William, and he concealed his knowledge of them.

The party set out on their walk; and the Duke, who was a real admirer of rural scenery, was charmed with the country; but when he came to the lovely spot where the abbey had stood, he was in raptures, and he lavished praises on Miss Howard’s taste in choosing such a place for study. “You were here, I suppose, Miss Howard,” said the Marquis, “the day of our arrival, when we met you and Miss Westburn with Lord Ravensworth.” Caroline coloured, she

knew not why, and only answered, "Yes."  
—"Is Lord Ravensworth so fond of music as he seems to be?"—"I suppose so," answered Caroline; "he does not play or sing himself, but I believe he has an excellent taste in music; don't you think so, Catherine?"—"He would have none, Caroline," answered the amiable Catherine, "if he did not admire your performance. I think I never heard you sing so enchantingly as you sang that charming hymn the morning he was here."

This was more food for Lord Beaumont's jealousy. "I should be extremely gratified, Miss Howard, to hear you sing in this cloister," cried the Duke. She instantly complied with his desire; and beckoning the cottager, whom she saw at a little distance, she desired him to bring her harp and music. The man obeyed, the rustic table was set, her seat drawn near it, and her harp placed as

she desired ; when, looking at it, and perceiving a knot of the riband that adorned it was gone, she called the cottager, and whispered him ; he answered in a low voice ; she smiled, nodded her head, and said, “ Very well, it does not signify.” Lord William was not far from her ; he saw she missed the knot, but could not hear the words that passed ; he knew not how to look ; he feared he was betrayed ; and if he was, Caroline had shewn so little concern for this mark of love, that his heart palpitated with fear and sorrow, under the very riband he had stolen, and which was now rendered dear to him, because it had belonged to her. He leaned against the old stone wall, and fixed his eyes upon the ground. He fell into a fit of musing on the probable misery of his future life, and the little kindness Caroline seemed now to feel for him. “ Perhaps,” thought he, “ it is fortunate for us both that she

resents my conduct, and hates me on account of it; yet I should hate myself did I act otherwise than I do.

‘The conscious mind is its own awful world.’”

He was now roused from his melancholy by the sound of her heavenly voice, in the hymn he had so often heard at Santa Maria's, where she and Teresa often, by the Mother Abbess's request, led the choir. All the happy past rushed like a torrent on his soul; he could no longer remain in the cloister, or support the pain he felt; and before Miss Howard had half finished, he stole from it, and walked down the meadow. The cunning cottager, who lay in wait for another half-crown, followed, and coming up to Lord William, said, “Your Honour must not suppose I told the young lady who took the riband from her harp; I knows better things.” (Lord William started; he had no idea of the man's

having seen the theft.) "Did she ask you?" replied he. "To be sure, your Honour, she did; but I was up with her; I knew better than to discover you, who were so generous of your money. I think you would rather tell her yourself some day or another; so says I to her, 'I beg your Ladyship's pardon, but one of my brats picked it off, and made such a divel of it, I threw it into the fire in a passion; but I hope you will excuse it, my Lady.' Now I hope your Honour will believe I would not have told of you for the world."

Lord William could not help smiling; and, as the man expected, putting money into his hand, bid him be silent on what had passed. "That I will; I know how to act, bless your Honour," dancing his half-crown in his hand, and walking off, proud of his own cunning. Lord William returned to the cloister, less angry with Caroline, and pressing the riband closer to his heart.



O tyrant love ! of what folly do you not make the wisest guilty ! Having loitered for a couple of hours at the ruins, Lady Gertrude proposed returning to the house, saying, they dined early, as the evening would be a busy one. On their way home, the Marquis requested Miss Howard's hand for the first set at the ball. She excused herself, being engaged to Lord Ravensworth. The Marquis started back, looked both distressed and displeased. "Is it possible Miss Howard is engaged to open the ball ? that indeed is extraordinary."—"Is it extraordinary that I should be engaged to dance the first set ?" cried she, laughing, and looking half angry. This a little restored Lord Beaumont's good humour ; he was ashamed of himself, and turning to her, said, "I should think it more extraordinary, if you were not engaged, Miss Howard ; I was, I own, thrown off my poise, and felt mortified ; I was

disappointed of the happiness Lord Ravensworth has wisely secured."

While he spoke, love and anger flashed from his eye. Caroline disliked his vehemence, and felt a degree of fear of him she had never before experienced. He perceived the change in her countenance, and approaching her with much tenderness, requested her pardon, saying, "Let me engage you for the second set, or I shall be miserable."—"Certainly, my Lord, it is not worth your making yourself miserable about; I am very willing to dance the second set with you," and she coldly withdrew her hand. "Cold, cruel, unkind Caroline!" cried he, "do you wish to torture me? I would rather give up the happiness of dancing with you than meet such frigid looks." She made no answer, but taking hold of Miss Westburn's arm, walked briskly on.

Caroline felt miserable; all she feared

was come to pass; the Marquis liked her, and she might suffer persecution on his account. Her hope of seeing Lady Emily his wife, seemed to vanish; but let what would happen, she was determined never to give him the smallest encouragement.

On their return to the house they found letters; Miss Howard had one from Lady Emily, entreating her to come soon, as London was now growing very gay; telling her all the news, and also that Captain Biron and Fitzroy had been in town some time, and both wished to see her again. "As to Fitzroy," said she, "he is more charming than ever; and I believe he struggles hard to forget you. Pray, Caroline, now that you have turned him adrift, don't try to throw your chains over him again; hate him, I beseech you, for a little while; and, perhaps, I shall some day give you leave to love him with a

sisterly affection." Miss Howard smiled at this permission ; she saw clearly what it meant ; but good-nature and friendship made her put a letter so giddily written into her pocket without disclosing the contents.

Lady Gertrude had scarcely read some lines of her letter, when she said, " Mr. Howard, we must return in two or three days to London. I am completely happy to find my dear father will be there ; in less than a fortnight I shall again have the blessing of being folded to his heart :"—and she burst into tears. This was the first intimation any one present, except her own family, had had of a reconciliation with her father, and they sincerely congratulated her and Mr. Howard on the occasion.

Some conversation took place (when Lady Gertrude left the room), from which the Duke was surprised and pleased to find she was heiress to Lord

Bellengen's earldom and large fortune, and he was charmed with the humble and unassuming manners she had always displayed ; and it was with infinite pleasure he saw, that this would pave the way to his son's happiness. Mr. Howard, anxious to gratify his wife, determined on returning to town in a week, and the Duke fixed his departure for the next Monday.

When the company retired to dress for Lord Ravensworth's ball, the Marquis went to his brother's apartment, and told him, how greatly he was hurt at Miss Howard's extreme coldness to him on most occasions, and at her engagement to the Earl to open his ball. "This entertainment," cried he, "is undoubtedly given to her, and she accepts it ; what am I to think of her conduct ? What a fool I have been not to speak to her, and have my fate determined ! I have no doubt Lady Gertrude,

and Howard, wish the match. I can't blame them, my dear William; I have been too slow; I have undone myself; how could I trust her from my sight?"

Here he walked about the chamber in great agitation, and turning every moment to ask his brother's advice how he should act;—then fixing his eyes on Lord William he said, “You have always been on the most friendly terms with this angel;—tell me, shall I speak plainly to her? shall I tell her the state of my heart? (surely she must already be acquainted with it;) or shall I follow my father's advice, and wait till we return to London?” Lord William scarcely knew what reply to make; he also walked about the room to conceal the workings of his mind, and at last said, “Frederick, I don't know what advice to give on so delicate a point; yet I think the sooner you know Miss Howard's mind, the better it will be for

your peace. If she feels that you are attached to her, she must, before this time have decided what her conduct with regard to you shall be. If she accepts you, I am well convinced that you possess her heart ; which, as far as I am acquainted with it, I think invaluable. Her father and mother love her too well, not to leave her choice free ; if Lord Ravensworth has gained her affections, you may rest assured you never had any chance with her, and must console yourself that matters have gone no farther.”

—“ O my dear William !” cried the Marquis, suddenly stopping, and laying his hand on his brother’s shoulder ; “ how calmly you talk, who have never loved, and can therefore reason coolly, and well. I am mad for love ; I dread a disappointment worse than death, and am therefore devoid of reason, and even common sense. I find that the bare idea of a rival distracts me.” (Lord

William sighed deeply.) “ Thank you, dear William, for your anxiety on my account,” continued Lord Beaumont, seizing his brother’s hand, and pressing it affectionately ; “ but I would not have you low, and lose the enjoyment of the evening for my distress ;”—then starting, and letting go his hand,—“ I will bear this misery no longer ; this very evening will I speak to her ; and life, or death, is in her answer.”

Lord William shuddered ; he entreated his brother to moderate his feelings ; “ You are right,” said he, “ to come to an *eclaircissement* with Miss Howard ; but if you go out in this state of mind, you will unfit yourself for conversation with her, and may destroy the pleasure of the evening.—To give you my real opinion, I do not believe Miss Howard has any attachment to Lord Ravensworth, nor do I believe she accepts this ball as from a professed lover.



He pays nearly as much attention to the lovely Miss Westburn, as to Miss Howard; and his leading up with the latter, may only be a compliment, on her coming into the country. I beseech you calm yourself, and get dressed; we shall be too late." Lord William's opinion had great weight with his brother; it also coincided with his wishes, and he returned in better temper to his own room.

Lord William, sensible of the hot temper of his brother, feared a quarrel between him and Lord Ravensworth, and endeavoured to persuade the Marquis to what he could not believe himself, for he plainly perceived Lord Ravensworth's attachment to Miss Howard; and the moment his brother had closed the door of his apartment, he opened another that led to Mr. Lindsey's; he there found that worthy man, and disclosed to him all that had passed. Mr.

Lindsey sincerely participated in the sorrows of his young friend, and praised him for his excellent and generous conduct. "You deserve happiness, my child," said the good man; "and I hope yet to see you blessed." They soon parted, determining to prevent, if possible, any misunderstanding between the Earl and Marquis.

As soon as the company had finished their toilet, they assembled in the drawing-room. The two young friends had taken some pains with their dress, and had succeeded. They were attired with elegance, and looked uncommonly lovely. On entering the drawing-room they received a thousand compliments. The Marquis had recovered himself, and got into tolerable spirits. As he could not dance with Miss Howard, he engaged Miss Westburn, and a short time saw them at Lord Ravensworth's door.

The Earl was rich, and splendid in

every thing ; and the entertainment of this night was a proof of his taste. He had sent to London for artists to decorate his rooms, but they chiefly acted under his direction. When the party from Rosefield entered the great hall, they were delighted with the fairy palace that presented itself. The lighting of the hall and staircase gave almost the blaze of day, and set off the decorations to the utmost advantage. Arabia breathed from every room. Performers on various instruments were stationed at proper distances, to answer each other,

“ And music gave its animating sound.”

Lord Ravensworth waited at the entrance of the first apartment to receive his lovely partner. The Duke attended Lady Gertrude. They found a large company assembled. Every one expressed astonishment at the beauty

and brilliancy of the rooms, and Lord Ravensworth told Miss Howard, if she was pleased, his most sanguine wishes were gratified. He led her into the ball-room, blushing like the morn, and beautiful as an angel. Every eye was turned on Caroline. Her movements were so elegant, her dancing so graceful, yet so light, that she seemed to tread on air.

Lord Ravensworth had conceived some suspicions the night before with respect to Caroline, not wide of the truth ; he was himself astonished that it did not give him a more severe pang. He still admired her as much as he had ever done ; he thought her beauty perfect, but beauty alone was not what would satisfy the Earl ; he aimed at an undivided heart. In dancing down the set he was all animation ; he appeared as happy as he was gay : and when he met

Miss Westburn in the dance, her sweet smile, and the perfect good-humour she shewed him, added to the gaiety of his heart, and he tenderly pressed her hand as he passed her, but not unseen by Lord Beaumont, who stood in astonishment at the Earl's conduct; and, knowing his amiable character, could not reconcile the tender attentions he paid to both the friends; but felt a secret joy at finding those attentions divided.

When Miss Howard had got to the bottom of the set she was out of breath, and looking out for a seat, perceived Lord William close to her, who flew to procure a chair, and in placing it for her he threw his eyes down, could not suppress a heavy sigh, and instantly retired without saying a word. Caroline, still panting from the dance, involuntarily turned her head towards him, and followed with her eyes his receding figure. The ball, the company, were

forgotten; till some one tapping her on the shoulder, she turned and saw the charming Catherine, with the Marquis standing near her, and Lord Ravensworth bringing her a glass of lemonade. In talking to her, the Earl said, "How sorry I am that common politeness now obliges me to ask Lady Almeria Portman to dance the next set! I hope, Miss Westburn, you will allow me the pleasure of dancing with you the set before supper." Catherine's heart bounded with joy, but she answered only with a bow and a smile.

At the sound of Lady Almeria's name Caroline felt sick; she did not know till then that she was among the guests. She feared the varying colour of her cheeks might betray her thoughts; and rising from her seat said, she would try to get a little air. The Marquis taking hold of her hand, led her to an open window; here the air really recovered her from the faintness that came over

her at the sound of Lady Almeria's name. The Marquis, more enchanted than ever, stood gazing at her with an admiration that was apparent to every one. Caroline was perfectly inattentive to his admiration or his conversation, and scarcely gave a direct answer to any thing he said. The music at last relieved her from her embarrassment, and Lord Beaumont taking her hand, they joined the dancers. Again her eye wandered in search of Lord William, and she perceived him seated by her mother, and seemingly conversing on what was going on in the room. "Why," thought she, "will he not dance? why not lead out his destined bride Lady Almeria? he surely must have known of her being in this country, when he came here with the Duke, and, perhaps, it was his inducement to come."

Poor Lord William was perfectly innocent of what Caroline's jealousy ac-

cused him of; he knew not of Lady Almeria's being in Hampshire till he saw her at the ball. That young lady was on a visit at Lord Danver's, and had come with his family to the entertainment given at the Grove.

Lady Almeria was pretty, but neither sensible nor good-natured; she was envious of the perfections of all handsome women, though she rated her own charms much higher than they merited. To-night she was in perfect ill temper; the wonderful beauty of Miss Howard, the elegance of her dress, the perfection of her dancing, and the great admiration and attention she met with, annoyed her Ladyship so much, that it drew forth all her spleen, and placed her understanding in its true point of view. High in rank and riches, she could not endure to see that respect paid to Caroline which she so much wished to engross herself. Her leading up Lord



Ravensworth's ball, had given her mortal offence. By every rudeness in dancing that she could be guilty of, she strove to shew her dislike of Miss Howard ; she could not refrain from saying to Lord Ravensworth, " I cannot conceive what all you men admire in Miss Howard ; I don't think her at all handsome."

The Earl smiled, but not with his usual sweetness ; the smile was satirical and contemptuous. He told Lady Almeria he was not surprised she did not think that lovely creature handsome. Men did not see women with the same eyes their own sex did. " Our admiration of beauty," cried he, " is augmented by sweetness of temper, elegance of manners, and good sense ; in all of which Miss Howard rivals every woman I ever yet met with."

Lady Almeria, vexed and provoked, bit her fan, and looked as spiteful as pos-

sible; declaring it was shameful to see the rout that was made about the girl. Lord Ravensworth smiled at her folly, and dragged her on in the dance, without paying her a single compliment. Becoming Lord William to come to her when she got to the bottom of the room, she told him, she was dancing with the greatest brute in existence, that perfectly insulted her to praise Miss Howard. Lord William answered, "It is wonderful, Madam, that Lord Ravensworth should do so, for I think it utterly impossible to draw a comparison between you and Miss Howard." His face in saying this was suffused with a deep glow, which soon gave place to his now constant paleness. Lady Almeria was charmed with an expression she took in a wrong sense. She smiled foolishly, played with her fan, instead of biting it, and giving a coy look at Lord William, declared he was a flatterer. He bowed;

but did not speak ; and Miss Howard, who was near, heard most of the conversation, and her eye glanced over the fond couple (as she supposed them to be) with pity and sorrow, and then withdrew to glance at them no more. Pride now swelled in her bosom, and animated her to a false cheerfulness ; she seemed at ease, and happy. The Marquis was charmed, she engrossed his whole attention ; and when they were obliged to change partners, he seemed miserable.

When the supper-rooms were opened Lord Ravensworth was ready to attend her, and placed himself between her and Catherine, with whom he had danced last. The happy Marquis sat next her on the other side, and their party was a cheerful one. It was impossible not to admire the magnificence of the entertainment, the comfort with which the company was accommodated, and the excellent attendance. Caroline,

who had never yet been at so fine a ball, was really delighted ; and expressed how much it surpassed her expectations. Catherine, addressing Lord Ravensworth, declared she thought it charming. The Earl looked at her a moment with surprise, and the expression of his face changing to softness, he whispered her, “ Are *you* in earnest ?—Do *you* think it charming ?” Blushing, she asked, “ Don’t you believe I speak truth ?”—“ You are a forgiving angel then,” said he, “ if you are so pleased as you appear to be to-night.” Catherine was confused ; she cast her eyes down, and he again whispered, “ I begin to think a repentant sinner might find grace in your eyes.” Catherine made no answer ; she coloured, and stooping forward, asked Miss Howard some question across the Earl. Lord Ravensworth then said, “ Miss Westburn, will you allow me the honour of dancing with you after

supper ?"—“ Certainly, my Lord ; I never am tired of dancing.”

Caroline now first perceived Lord William and Lady Almeria sitting opposite to her. Her Ladyship was tittering, and playing the fool ; he seemingly very attentive, and helping her to every thing within his reach, which she devoured most ungracefully. “ Oh !” thought Caroline, “ how mighty is the power of gold !” For she could not suppose any thing else attracted Lord William towards such a fool, though a few moments before, she had heard him pay her a compliment at her expense ; but what was her surprise to hear Lady Almeria say, as they rose from supper, “ Well, Lord William, as you will have it so, I will take compassion on you, and dance this set.”

Again the gay crew resumed their revels ; and when the first dance was

over, the Marquis drew our heroine to a retired window, and they sat down. Caroline was nearly exhausted, and it was with some difficulty she suppressed her tears. Lord William had been all attention to his partner, and when standing near Caroline, had never spoken to her ; he seemed assiduously to avoid any conversation. She could not endure this behaviour, though she despised it ; and the Marquis asking her if she was indisposed, she said, she was fatigued, and could dance no more. “ Nor will I,” said he ; “ I am happy, Miss Howard, in having an opportunity of being even a few moments alone with you. Could I tell you all my heart has suffered these few days, you have too much gentleness not to pity me. No one on the rack could endure more. Will you forgive me if I ask you a single question ?” Caroline was terrified ; she looked at him, but could not speak ; to inspire

him with love was the last thing she could wish, and she now had reason to suppose she had done so. “You will not answer me, Miss Howard; I hoped the friendship we have lived in, would warrant my asking a simple question.”

—“Lord Beaumont can never doubt my treating him as a friend.”—“Dear Miss Howard, tell me then—and don’t be offended—are the attentions of Lord Ravensworth agreeable to you?”—

“Lord Ravensworth’s civilities must always be so.”—“Civilities! You will not then understand my meaning; there is more of tenderness in his conduct than civility.”—“Lord Beaumont, I do understand your question; and though I don’t think you ought to make a point of my replying to it, I will do so, and with sincerity. No attention but what proceeds from friendship can be wished

for, or accepted by me, from Lord Ravensworth; I hope his affections are

already given to one who truly merits them."

Caroline stopped, and was rising to leave the window ; but the Marquis held her with gentle force, saying, " Cruel Miss Howard, are you flying from me at the moment you relieve me from agony ? I beseech you hear me." She struggled to get loose, but he still grasped her hand, saying, " My soul adores you ; it has done so from the first moment I beheld you ;—every hour has riveted my chains. Since you have discarded Fitzroy and Lord Ravensworth, I have no rival near"—(Caroline started, and endeavoured to leave the window in vain) —"and I will, unworthy as I am, persecute you with my love, in the hope to warm your marble heart." — " My marble heart !" repeated Caroline, not considering what she said. " Yes, your marble heart, lovely Caroline. May it not be compared to stone, when none



can warm it ?"—“ For Heaven’s sake let me go, my Lord ; this conduct is not right. What will the Duchess and Lady Emily say to you ? You are wrong, my Lord ; I never can, nor will listen to you.”—“ Miss Howard, you must listen to me. I swear to you, Emily is as little inclined to love me, as I am to think of her. If I am happy enough to gain your heart, no power on earth shall part us. You are all I prize in this world—Can you wonder then at my pursuing you ?”—“ I can hear no more, my Lord ; and must again entreat you to put an end to such conversation for ever. You distress me, my Lord ; I am sorry you have had an opportunity of holding this unfortunate discourse. My friendship, and thanks for your good opinion, is all I can give you ; and I beseech you, if you wish to retain that friendship, never to speak of love again.” Saying this, she disengaged herself from the

astonished Marquis, and seeing Catharine, laid hold of her arm, and left him in a state of misery not to be conceived.

Lord Beaumont was disappointed, wretched. He did not think he had a rival, and yet he dreaded every thing. What could Miss Howard's heart be made of? He continued leaning against the window with a disconsolate air, and anxious for the hour of their return to Rosefield; his eyes followed Caroline, but she was soon lost in the crowd. Completely miserable at the declaration the Marquis had made her, she was glad, under the pretence of fatigue, to escape from the ball-room; and taking refuge in an inner one with her friend, she threw herself on a sofa, pale, agitated, and seemingly distressed. Catherine was alarmed, and entreated she would tell her what was the matter? "Nothing, my dear Catherine; I am only

tired to death, and I hope we shall soon return home."

Lord Ravensworth entered the room, and on perceiving the pale countenance and agitated manner of Caroline, was persuaded she was distressed at Lord William's attentions to Lady Almeria. To relieve her mind, he good-naturedly said, "That silly creature, Lady Almeria, is gone; Lord William must be rejoiced, for I saw he was quite weary of her conversation."—"If that is so," replied Caroline, "it is very unfortunate he should have such a feeling about a woman he is to be married to."—"Bless me, Miss Howard! I never heard he was to be married to Lady Almeria; Lord William could never give his heart to such a woman."—"I know nothing of his heart," replied she, colouring violently, "nor of Lady Almeria—perhaps her immense fortune is the great attraction."

They were now interrupted by the entrance of Lord William, followed by the Marquis; they came from Lady Gertrude, to say she was waiting for the fair friends to return home. Lord Ravensworth took care of Miss Howard; while Lord Beaumont, dejected and sullen, escorted Miss Westburn, and then said to his brother, he should be glad if he would accompany him home in his chariot. Lord William followed in silence; and the servant had scarcely closed the door, when the disconcerted Marquis entered on what had passed between him and Miss Howard. Happy was it for Lord William that the relation was given in the dark, otherwise his ingenuous countenance would have betrayed his feelings. What a tale was it for Lord William! Caroline had rejected every one for him; with all his modesty, he could not doubt it. He was conscious she must think herself ill-

used ; what then was his rapture to find himself still beloved ! The rank of a Duchess, the most splendid fortune relinquished, and such a man as Lord Beaumont rejected, because her heart was devoted to him ! For a moment joy ran through every fibre, but it was short-lived ; the contest was with his brother, with a brother that doated on him, whom he fondly loved. Honour forbid him to make use of his advantages, and divided him from her he loved, distant as the end of the world.

After a long pause the Marquis said, "I cannot live in this torture ; I will speak to her again to-morrow. I will also be sincere with my father, and tell him I have broken my promise to him." Lord William roused himself from his dream of felicity, and strongly combating his fond affection, advised his brother again to solicit Miss Howard, and also to be explicit with the Duke.

“ I will take your advice, my kind William. Whatever my fate may be, it is best it should be decided ; at present I am truly miserable.” Lord William mentally said, “ I am not less so.” The Marquis continued : “ I almost dread an interview with Miss Howard ; her coldness is not to be borne ; you, William, must be my advocate with her.”

Happy for Lord William that now the carriage stopped (and the brothers alit to assist the ladies from theirs). He could make no reply to Lord Beaumont’s last words ; and pleading the lateness of the hour, he parted with him at his chamber-door, and flew to shut himself in his own room, where, instead of going into bed, he threw himself on it, and gave free course to a shower of tears. The human heart must give vent to sorrow, or it would burst ; the severest pang that it can feel is voluntarily to tear itself from a be-

loved and loving object. Lord William had relinquished all that he thought the earth comprised of happiness for himself, to his brother; and the consciousness of acting right was his only comfort. He had not even the consolation of Miss Howard's knowing his sufferings; she thought him unkind, perhaps she thought him worthless; and the same honour that tyrannized so cruelly over his fondest affections, forbade him to undeceive her. Here we must leave him for a little, pitying his griefs, and hoping,

"Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of Care," may not entirely forsake his couch.

Silent, pale, and unhappy, Caroline ascended the staircase that led to her apartment, and complaining of great fatigue, avoided entering into conversation with her friend. Catherine too was absorbed in thought, but hers

was of a more agreeable nature. To her alone had the ball been delightful. Hope, that had almost deserted her, returned, and brought her wanderer home. She esteemed Lord Ravensworth too highly to suppose he meant to play with her affection. His attentions were animated and tender. She knew he had intended the entertainment he had given, a compliment to Caroline ; but before its close she was convinced he had changed his object ; and from the expressions which escaped him, her delighted heart flattered itself that she would soon reign sole mistress of his.

Rejoicing in her future prospects, the innocent and amiable Catherine sunk to rest ; even in her slumbers she lost not the idea of the Earl ; she saw him return to her with redoubled tenderness and truth, and listened to his vows of everlasting love. Her dreams did not



deceive her. Her heavenly disposition had made so great an impression on Lord Ravensworth, that from that night he had determined to offer her his hand. Without intending it, he had made trial of her heart and temper, and he felt that he was to blame to suffer the dazzling beauty of her lovely friend to draw him, even for a time, from such sweetness. He felt pleased that he had been brought to reason by the discovery he had made, that Miss Howard had no heart to give him ; and he found that the most lovely form cannot long enslave where the heart is alienated. He acknowledged, “ It is kindness that warms.” And when his company departed, and the sound of music ceased in his hall, with a cheerful mind he retired, congratulating himself that he had given this ball, which had restored him to his senses.

True love 's the gift which God has given  
To man alone beneath the heaven.

It is the secret sympathy,

The silver link, the silken tie,

Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,

In body and in soul can bind.

## CHAP. XXV.

“ If love, my Lord, is choice, who loves in vain,  
Should blame himself alone; and if 't is fate,  
'Tis fate in all.”

THE day appointed for the departure of the Duke and his party from Rosefield, was the day but one after the ball. Lord Beaumont, as we have seen in the last chapter, determined to be explicit with Miss Howard. He was too ardent in every thing, and too sincere a lover, to be satisfied with delays; what he wished to do, he executed suddenly. The moment he was risen, he went to the Duke's chamber, to know if he was stirring: the Duke was still in bed, and seeing his son had some anxiety in his countenance, he sent his servant out of the room, and desiring the Marquis to

sat down on the bedside, kindly inquired what disturbed him.

Lord Beaumont, encouraged by his father's kindness, disclosed all that had passed between him and Miss Howard at the ball, excusing himself for having made his declaration before the time fixed on between them. "Circumstances, my dear father," cried the Marquis, "urged me to it, and took from me the power, though they left me the will to obey you." On hearing an account of Miss Howard's conduct, the Duke appeared much surprised; and musing some time, said, "This is an extraordinary affair, Beaumont; when you told me of your attachment to this charming girl, I believed you were secure of her heart, and only wanted my sanction to bring things to a speedy conclusion. I am really astonished, and can only believe that you have deceived yourself, and that there is some favoured

lover stands between you and your wishes.”—“Impossible!” cried Lord Beaumont hastily, “I can answer for that not being so; she has lived in intimacy only with Fitzroy and my brother. Poor Fitzroy was dying for her, and she rejected him before we left London; and here Lord Ravensworth has done all but absolutely declare himself. The whole country supposed there would have been an union; but Miss Howard has treated him with such extreme coldness, that, from his behaviour last night, I am persuaded he will renew his addresses to Catherine Westburn; I also perceive Miss Howard is doing every thing to forward it.”—“Well, my dear Beaumont, I did not think you were a man to fail acquiring a disengaged heart: putting your merits and person out of the question, your rank and fortune must be a great attraction in the age we live in, when there is little romantic love left in the

world, though much talked of. My advice to you is, to give up Miss Howard, since she appears so averse to your proposals; you would be very miserable, could you persuade her to marry you, and at last found her heart was in the keeping of another.”—“ Give her up! Oh! don’t give your son advice that he cannot follow; and that if he did, would render him for ever wretched. No; I will still endeavour to make an impression on her cold heart—a heart that is perfect ice.” He then entreated the Duke to speak to Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude. “ Are you not too precipitate?” replied the Duke. “ We go to London tomorrow; Howard and his family soon follow; let the lovely Caroline have time to consult her own heart, and perhaps it may speak more in your favour than it does at present.”—“ I cannot, my father, see the use of delay in such a situation; I have had a good deal of

conversation with my brother on the subject, and he thinks with me that I had best speak to Miss Howard to-day, and I know he will exert all the influence his friendship with her gives him in my favour."—"Your brother is then acquainted with your attachment?" said the Duke. "Certainly: I never had a secret from him, or he from me: you yourself, my dear father, laid the foundation of that fraternal love between us, that nothing can have power to destroy."

The Duke was silent, and his countenance assumed a sad and pensive cast, which Lord Beaumont saw, and attributed to his anxiety for his success with Miss Howard. "I wish for nothing more than to call Caroline Howard my daughter," resumed the Duke, "and will do all you can wish me to do." Lord Beaumont, delighted with his father's kindness, stooped down, and tenderly embraced him. They were both

affected, and the Duke desired his son to retire, that he might rise.

Lord Beaumont withdrew, but the Duke stirred not: he fell into a fit of musing on a subject very painful to his good heart. All that the Marquis had told him passed through his mind. Miss Howard's supposed coldness he could not give credit to. All the amiable men she had rejected, such excellent matches in every point of view, he believed were relinquished for one who had the entire possession of her heart. Where then was that favoured object to be found? He knew enough of Caroline to be assured her affections could only be bestowed on one every way worthy of them. The object soon presented itself to the Duke's terrified imagination: it could only be Lord William; he turned from the idea with terror, but it forced itself upon him, and lay a weight on his spirits impossible to shake off. Dissension be-



tween his sons would murder his peace, even affect his life, which he felt would be of little value to him, were the happiness of his family destroyed. Even should his children prove themselves the fondest brothers, the most amiable and forbearing of men, yet he thought what pangs their young hearts must endure, what sorrow might perchance embitter their future life ; and what prospect should he have of seeing them happily established in the world, as he had hoped ? What grief would the Duchess feel, who, with some whims, was yet a fond and excellent mother. “ Oh ! ” cried the worthy Duke, while sighs of paternal affection heaved his bosom, “ Lord William’s delicate health, his paleness and languor, are now easily accounted for. I know what youth is, and therefore I fear, when the passions are at the helm, the vessel must be in danger. My sons, my sons, if you are to be disunited, may

the grave first close upon your father, and save him from being the miserable witness of your strife!"

This effusion over, the Duke endeavoured at some composure, and he pondered deeply on how he had best conduct himself. These dreadful suspicions, indeed almost certainties, of what was so blasting to his hopes, were, he trusted, confined to his own breast. Nothing appeared either in the conduct of Lord William, or of Miss Howard, to warrant them; and yet, from what had passed, the Duke had no doubt remaining. He judged it then wise to suppress his own feelings, depend, as he still flattered himself he might do, on the honour and virtue of his sons, and not to give the most distant hint to mortal of his suspicions; and he rose with a determination to make proposals in form to Mr. Howard, for the union of his daughter with the Marquis. The moment he was

dressed, he repaired to the breakfast-room with a beating heart and trembling step, and almost as much agitated as had he been the lover. Every one had preceded him, and breakfast was already served. This relieved his embarrassment, and he cast his eyes round to try if he could pass an impartial judgment on the interesting objects before him. He sat down near Catherine, and talked of the last night's entertainment, which did not fail to animate her cheek with the most brilliant colours; she seemed as happy as she was. He then turned his searching eyes on Caroline, hers were mostly cast down; she looked pale and languid, and he perceived

“ That deep within her throbbing breast  
She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest.”

Lord William was uniformly the same: the Marquis seemed anxious and uneasy, and the conversation was forced on all

sides. Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude, ignorant as yet of the events of the preceding night, were unknowing of what passed in the minds of the younger part of the family.

Breakfast was scarcely over, when Caroline left the room, followed by her friend. Lady Gertrude had the night before requested Mrs. Westburn to allow of her daughter's accompanying them to London, and remaining with them during their stay. Her parents were delighted with the prospect of her enjoying the pleasures of London, rather than be confined in the country with them; they looked on Lord Ravensworth as lost to her, and were therefore more particularly anxious to amuse her. Catherine and Caroline were congratulating themselves on the felicity of being so much longer together, when the Marquis entered the room, and going up to Miss Howard, requested half an hour's

private conversation with her. The rose instantly gave place to the lily on her cheek, and trembling she granted his request. Catherine withdrew, and Caroline, scarcely able to support herself, and almost breathless, sat down on a sofa near where she had been standing. The Marquis gazed on her in astonishment; he saw the paleness of her face, and was mortified. Then placing himself by her side, he endeavoured to take her hand, which she withdrew. “ Dear Miss Howard, how am I to interpret your dejection? Is it so dreadful to be beloved, and do I offend you by requesting a few minutes conversation? I thought we were friends, and you treat me like an enemy; you withdrew that dear hand from me, I fear, in anger. O Miss Howard! are those blessed hours never to return, that I have spent with you in Italy; those hours in which I resigned my heart without dread,

and under a fond delusion, to the most fascinating woman in the world?" The Marquis was proceeding, when Caroline stopped him, saying, "My Lord, if those hours of friendship were dear to you, it is in your own power to bring them back."—"How!" cried he, interrupting her with vehemence, "in my power! I can only say I would bring them back with the loss of every thing but life—life I would preserve to enjoy them."—"Will you, my Lord," replied Caroline calmly, "give me leave to speak, and listen with patience?" Lord Beaumont made an impatient motion with his head, and she continued: "If your Lordship will be satisfied with my friendship, even warm disinterested friendship, it is yours: but love is not in my power, nor shall I ever feel it for your Lordship: your merits are known to me; I acknowledge you worthy of the first woman in the country, but my determina-

tion is long fixed ; I will not marry any man whom I cannot prefer to the whole world ; I therefore beseech you, my Lord, as I cannot feel that preference for you, not to make me miserable by a useless pursuit, and perhaps subject me to much solicitation, to which I never will yield."

Here Miss Howard ceased, seeing something terrible in the Marquis's countenance. His anguish was unutterable ; he groaned aloud ; he struck his forehead, and, starting from his seat, he stamped upon the ground. " My Lord," cried Caroline, rising, and laying hold of his arm, " I beseech you to be calm ; you absolutely terrify me. If this be love, it is too violent for my nature, and I entreat you to put an end to it."—" An end to it !" retorted he ; " cruel Caroline, I shall, I believe, put an end to myself."

Miss Howard, overcome with terror,

sunk on the sofa, and burst into tears. The Marquis became instantly calm ; he flew to her, threw himself on his knees before her, clasped her hand in his, entreated to be forgiven, and to be heard. “ I told you last night,” said he, “ that your heart was of marble ; only hint to me what can soften it, I shall think no sufferings too severe, nothing that I can endure too cruel, if you will only say you may in time relent ; give me even a shadow of hope, hold out some comfort to save me from madness.”—“ My Lord, I will not deceive you ; I never can nor ever will be yours ; I have offered you my sincere friendship, if you will accept it ; but neither you, nor any other mortal, shall persecute me, or force my heart.” She rose with firmness, and was going to quit the apartment, when Lord Beaumont stepped between her and the door, and in tears of penitence entreated her forgiveness.



“Excuse my violent nature, Miss Howard, I beseech you to excuse it; I know I am not acting right, but I will not, I cannot give up the ecstatic hope of yet rendering myself agreeable to you. I accept with gratitude your offered friendship; time and perseverance may yet do something for me; give me your hand in token of a reconciliation.”—“On no other terms, my Lord, than your never again mentioning love.”—“Give me your hand on any terms,” cried he, seizing it in spite of her, and carrying it to his lips.

The door opened, and Lord William entered; he started, and was retiring; deep anguish was visible in his countenance, and the utmost confusion in Caroline’s; for their eyes met as the door was opened, to which Lord Beaumont stood with his back. Turning at the noise, he saw his brother retreating, and said, “Dear William, pray come in, and

try to assist me in making my peace with this inhuman angel : you can tell her how I adore her ; you are too gentle to terrify her, as I have done, and may perhaps plead my cause better than I can do myself."

Miss Howard's presence of mind nearly forsook her ; she would have given worlds to have been spared this scene ; but she found the necessity of bringing it to the conclusion she wished, and rallying her flagging spirits, she desired Lord William to come in. " I request it, my Lord," she cried, " that you may be a witness to what I say to your brother ; he accuses me of cruelty and hardness of heart, because I entreat him not to persecute me with his love. As you entered, I offered him my friendship, my warm sincere friendship. Perhaps my nature has nothing of love in it," said she blushing ; " and if that should be found to be the case, I do not deserve condemnation for

the fault only of my nature. Never," cried she with emphasis, "never will I give my hand without my heart; therefore, my Lord, in the presence of your brother, I beg you to accept my thanks for the good opinion you have of me; and shew me that you wish to retain mine, by ceasing to persecute me with a love it is impossible for me to return."

Saying this, she left the brothers both gazing after her while they could see her, and she retired to her apartment, there to give vent to a violent shower of tears that much relieved her overcharged heart. Her intention was to go immediately, and inform her mother of all that had passed between her and the Marquis. She was bathing her eyes, and composing her spirits, to fit her for the scene she was to encounter, and which she dreaded being a persecuting one, when Lady Gertrude's maid tapped at the door, and informed her her Lady

wished to speak with her in her dressing-room. With hasty and trembling steps she instantly obeyed the summons: she found her mother sitting pensively on the couch, and her father walking about the room.

When Miss Howard entered, both her parents felt uneasy at her pale looks; and Lady Gertrude calling her, made her sit down by her. They then informed her, that as soon as breakfast was over, the Duke had desired a private conversation with them, for no other purpose but to make the handsomest proposals for her in the name of his son Lord Beaumont. The Duke had, they declared, been infinitely generous, beyond their most sanguine wishes, in his provision for her, and did not wish any fortune with her. "But, my dear child," continued Lady Gertrude, "both your father and I are much grieved and astonished to find from the Duke that

his excellent son is not agreeable to you, at least that you hinted so to the Marquis last night."

Caroline hung down her head; she was, for the first time in her life, afraid of her parents, of those tender parents whose love she prized above her life.

She could not tell them the truth, nor lay her heart open to their view; and this was the cause of her secret dread.

At last her father, stopping just before her, said, "Are you afraid, Caroline, to entrust your mother and me with your thoughts, that you are silent on a subject that interests you and us so greatly?"

—"No," replied Caroline, "I am not afraid of you, but I dread making my dear parents unhappy, or displeasing them in the smallest degree."—"This

is not the point, my child," said Lady Gertrude: "is it true, that you have rejected the addresses of the Marquis?"

—"I certainly have, Madam," replied

Caroline ; “ and when you sent Eleanor to call me, I was coming of myself to inform you and my father that I last night refused to listen to the Marquis ; that this morning he renewed his addresses, and received from me the same answer ; I have just left him and Lord William together.”

Mr. Howard was silent ; he stood looking steadily at his daughter. Lady Gertrude appeared extremely unhappy, and after a short pause said, “ Caroline, you don’t know what you refuse ; Lord Beaumont is a charming man, high in rank and fortune, and devoted to you : what, my dear child, can you expect ?” — “ Happiness, my dear mother, and with Lord Beaumont I could never feel it ; amiable as he is, I should not like him for my husband : do not, my dear parents, put a force upon my inclinations.”

Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude were

extremely disconcerted ; their schemes both for the happiness (as they believed) and for the aggrandizement of their child were smothered in the birth ; they almost imagined some spell surrounded Caroline, that rendered her so insensible ; and they found, as all mortals do, that one ardent wish disappointed, is not recompensed by the gratification of many. Remembering how they had loved themselves, and what happiness they derived from the congeniality of their own minds, they could not bring themselves to urge their child to a connexion she so disliked, however splendid ; and they determined to seek the Duke, and inform him of their ill success. The Duke was seeking them, and a servant just then announced him. As he entered, Caroline was the first object that presented itself ; but he augured no good from her pale and dejected appearance. Going towards her, and taking her cold hand

in his, he said, "My dear Miss Howard, you are, I hope, informed of my conference with your parents; I am all anxiety to know if I may flatter myself with the happiness of calling you, whom I so much admire and esteem, by the sweet name of daughter."

Caroline rose on the Duke's approach, and when he had ceased speaking, thanked him with the greatest modesty for the honour he and the Marquis had done her, and expressed her concern that she could not accept his noble offer. "I fear, my Lord," cried she (struggling for utterance), "I shall never be entitled to the tender appellation you so kindly wish to give me." Here was more meant than met the ear; and it did not escape the Duke, who could not now doubt his own penetration. Taking her hand tenderly, "I will not despair," said he: "time brings about strange things; for the present I must acquiesce



with Miss Howard's wishes, but in me she shall always find a friend."

The Duke spoke from his heart ; his admiration of her was increased a thousand fold from her present conduct ; he was charmed with her steady mind, with her truth, and the constancy and sincerity of her affections. " Other girls," said he mentally, " would be dazzled by the splendour of a Dukedom ; she takes inferior rank and fortune with the man she loves. From my soul I pity the man that loses such a woman, though I pray that some fortunate and unforeseen event may give her to my William." Such were his thoughts and wishes while Miss Howard was thanking him for his goodness to her, and deprecating his anger.

The Duke having paid his compliments to Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude, retired, and Caroline flinging her arms round her father and mother, and

embracing them affectionately and in silence, glad to escape from such a severe trial, quitted the room, and meeting Catherine, was relieved by hearing that the brothers were gone out to ride. Taking her friend's arm, she led her to the pleasure-grounds, where she unburdened her full heart, concealing only the share Lord William had in all her uneasiness. Catherine, who was affectionately attached to her, felt grieved that she had put an end to the amiable Marquis's suit, but avoided distressing her friend by impertinent curiosity.

These amiable girls lingered in the grounds till near the dinner-hour, and on their return to the house were agreeably surprised to find Lord Ravensworth, who was come to dinner. They flew to dress, and our fair readers may suppose that Catherine bestowed that day a little more time on her looking-glass than she generally did. She was rewarded for

her trouble by the looks of approbation and tenderness lavished on her by Lord Ravensworth. He seated himself at table, as he usually did, between the friends : this was comfort at the present to Caroline, as she had now no fear of sometimes occupying his attention.

The Duke declared at dinner that his kind hosts must be troubled with him for another day, as the wheel of his carriage was repairing, and the workmen had informed him it could not be ready till the day after the next. Lord Ravensworth hearing him tell Lady Gertrude this, made it a point that the whole party should dine with him the next day. In the present situation of her family, Lady Gertrude was glad to accept the invitation, as she considered it would be a relief to Caroline, and free her from any awkwardness on Lord Beaumont's account.

The Marquis was pensive, though at

times his quick and lively temper broke through all gloom, and rendered him almost as agreeable as ever. He was extremely attentive to Caroline, but did not torment her, and she conducted herself with ease and good nature. They had their usual evening concert, and sung together, and in turn. Catherine was all life ; Caroline's heart was heavy ; and having finished a beautiful Italian air the Duke had requested her to gratify him with, she withdrew to a retired corner of the room, and seated herself, as if she was attentive to the music at a little distance. Lord William perceived her, and approaching, seated himself close to her. Her heart beat high against a lace shawl she had thrown over her. Lord William was not lately in the habit of sitting near her ; it was unusual with him to do so ; he looked ill ; he was melancholy, and two or three times attempted to speak to her, without utter-

ing a sound to be heard : at last he said, “ Miss Howard, after what I have witnessed this morning, I fear giving you offence, if I address you on the part of my unhappy brother. He has solicited my interference in his behalf. Will you forgive the liberty I take ? I think, I hope you will do so, when you consider how deeply interested I must be in such a brother’s happiness : his heart is entirely yours : his life, I verily believe, will be endangered, if you continue your rigour. May I entreat you to reflect how worthy he is of your love, how sincere his attachment ; and if you accept him, how bright your future prospects will be, with every advantage you can derive from rank and wealth, and adored by a husband so worthy of you, whose happiness will be to gratify, even to anticipate, your every wish. I entreat you, Miss Howard, to have some pity on his sufferings ; I know what they are ; I can

vouch for his truth ; I have long known all he feels."

At this Miss Howard turned her eyes full upon Lord William ; she could scarcely believe her senses : that he should come to plead for another, even for a brother, she thought a proof of want of love and every feeling, that she could not forgive ; and rising from her chair, she said with a haughty air, " I desire, my Lord, never to hear a word on the subject more. I hope you will allow me to be a judge of my own happiness. I have already said, I cannot find it with Lord Beaumont. I confess, my Lord, I know nothing of love : I hate the idea of it ; nor never will I trust my happiness to faithless man. I shall be obliged to you, my Lord, to tell your brother, he had better not have given you this commission ; he knows my sentiments already ; had I been inclined to love, the amiable Fitzroy, who was

really" (and she laid an emphasis on *really*) "attached to me, would not have been rejected : though I have banished him from me, I remember him with affection and gratitude." Saying this, she left the spot where Lord William was, and left him with a dagger in his heart. Did she then so despise him, that, in her own mind, she contrasted Fitzroy's conduct with his, and lamented that she could not reward the love of his rival ? To think thus, was almost to repent not having done so.

When Lord William was too miserable to support his own distress, he flew to Mr. Lindsey, who encouraged him in acting as became his situation ; and if this good man could not restore him to happiness, he at least consoled him by his approbation of his amiable and virtuous conduct.

## CHAP. XXVI.

“ ——— The pride of swains  
 Palemon was, the gen'rous and the rich,  
 Who led the rural life in all its joy,  
 And elegance. - - - - -

The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine.”

THOMSON.

THE morning came, the sun rose in brightness, but did not restore cheerfulness to the inhabitants of Rosefield. No heart in the group was satisfied but Catherine's. Caroline, indeed, found some relief in being engaged for the day at Lord Ravensworth's; and till the hour came that was to carry them to the Grove, she spent her time in her mother's dressing-room, or her own apartment. Catherine's affectionate heart grieved to see her oppressed with



melancholy, but delicacy prevented her teasing her with questions.

The weather was delightful ; it was now the latter end of April ; the drive to Lord Ravensworth's was romantic ; the air and change of place revived Caroline ; and though the lustre of her eyes was clouded by a soft languor, and her cheek had changed the deep hue of the carnation for the pale tint of the blush rose, every one confessed she never had appeared more lovely ; there was an angelic sweetness in her deportment, that, without lessening the dignity which was natural to her, fascinated every beholder.

Lord Ravensworth had engaged Mr. and Mrs. Westburn, some gentlemen of his acquaintance, and Sir Richard and Lady Hill, with their two daughters, very fine and agreeable girls, to pass the day at the Grove. The Hills were his near relations, and were then on a party at Southampton. A number of the

neighbouring families were invited to a rustic ball in the evening.

As Lord Ravensworth has declared his intention of dining in his grounds, if the weather favoured him, every one came in an elegant undress, and prepared for walking. Caroline, who had so lovely a person to adorn, was not, on that account, careless of her appearance; she knew that dress, judiciously chosen, and suited to the wearer, adds grace to every form: simplicity and elegance always presided at her toilet, and she preferred perfect neatness to the richest apparel. Her fair friend was not inferior to her in this respect; and, on the present occasion, nothing could exceed the delicacy of their appearance.

If the Earl had had the choice of a day, he could not have chosen one more suited to his wishes; it was all ethereal mildness, and gentle zephyrs only fanned

the air—his garden and his grounds were

“ One boundless blush, one universal bloom.”

In the most charming part of the domain his mother's taste had erected two beautiful rooms in the style of a cottage : it was sequestered, but not gloomy ; a small pleasure-ground, exquisitely laid out, surrounded it ; a verdant hill at the back, covered with forest-trees, evergreens, and flowering shrubs, protected it from the north ; a beautiful and clear rivulet ran in front, and from the cottage branched off two gravel walks, one of which bending to the south, and running in a winding direction, was bordered only by flowering shrubs, hawthorns, and rose-trees, and took its course through an extensive and verdant lawn, covered with sheep and cattle : the other walk was sheltered by fine trees, whose branches in many places

meeting over-head, gave in sultry weather the most delightful shade; holly, laurustinus, and laurel, grew beneath; and round their roots primroses, wild violets,

“ And all the lowly children of the shade,”

peeped forth, and scattered their rich perfumes around. These walks were long, and terminated, one by a fine view of the sea, the other by a hill covered with wood, and the spire of a distant church, from whence in a still evening, in this sequestered spot, you might hear its bell

“ Fling to the hollow gale its sullen sound.”

The cottage was fitted up with elegance and perfect taste, but all was rural. The sitting-room opened into a rustic building, formed for a conservatory and aviary. Swans sailed up and down the little stream, over which a rustic bridge was thrown, through whose arches a

fairy landscape was visible from the windows of the cottage. Peacocks, and a collection of the most beautiful fowl, wandered round this charming spot, and fed tamely on the green.

Lord Ravensworth received his guests in his house, and soon after proposed a walk to the cottage. None of the company but the Westburns had ever seen it. The Earl led them through many winding walks to this his favourite spot, and coming suddenly on such fairy ground, the company were in raptures. He was completely happy, and his attention to the fair friends was what it had ever been. The Marquis was assiduous about Caroline, but not obtrusive, and she endeavoured to rally her spirits, and behave to him with ease. The company having spent an hour in rambling over this little paradise, and admiring its various beauties, dinner was announced. When the eating-room was thrown open,

all were charmed with the elegance of the apartment, and the Arcadian views from the window which opened on the ground. Magnificence was banished from this abode ; neither silver nor gold was to be seen : an excellent repast had been prepared ; the most delicate and delicious viands, and all the rarities of the season, were served in common china.

The gay Mr. Westburn, who felt that his daughter was the chief object in this entertainment, was all life ; in his company it was scarcely possible to be dull. Wit and mirth seasoned the feast, which was prolonged till almost dark ; and it appeared that Lord Ravensworth neglected calling for lights. He was sitting between Miss Howard and Miss Westburn, and alternately conversing with them, when the whole cottage, the conservatory, the trees that immediately surrounded the lawn on which it stood,

and the gravel walk arched over-head by trees, were all suddenly, and almost in an instant, illuminated ; music was heard at the same time from different parts of the grounds, and the whole company started in surprise from table to behold the beauty of the surrounding scenery. Lord Ravensworth, drawing an arm of each of the fair friends within his, led them to the lawn. At the end of the walks they perceived rockets that appeared to reach the sky ; and these were followed by a beautiful exhibition of fireworks, while a charming band of music added enchantment to the scene.

The guests invited for the evening began to arrive ; the cottage was deserted for the lawn, which was soon covered by cheerful and happy groups. From one of the walks appeared a troop of young rustics neatly dressed, carrying baskets of flowers, presenting the juvenile part of the company with nosegays ;

they strewed the rest at their feet, and laying down their baskets, began a rustic dance. The Duke was charmed. All approached Lord Ravensworth to express their admiration of his fête. He declared their gratification was an ample reward, and said, smiling, "I trust my young friends will give me a proof of their approbation, by joining in the mirth of my honest tenants. Suppose, Miss Westburn, we form a second troop of dancers?" and taking her hand, he requested Caroline to follow them. The Marquis heard him, and with timidity offered his to Miss Howard, who accepted it with cold civility. All the young people prepared for dancing, and Lord William, finding no excuse, took Miss Hill for his partner. Between the sets, refreshments were brought upon the lawn, and the night was so heavenly, that every one preferred the open air to the cottage. They wandered from walk



to walk ; and rustic seats having been placed in different parts of the grounds, the company at times sat alone, or in groups, to enjoy the busy scene at a little distance.

Lord Ravensworth contrived to draw Catherine into a retired walk, where he entreated her forgiveness for the wanderings of his heart. He stopped, as if ashamed and distressed ; but a smile from Catherine shewed how sincerely he was forgiven, and with what joy she received the wanderer back.

My fair readers must excuse my expatiating here on the eloquence of the Earl, and the reception it met with. We can assure them, he said all they could wish a lover of their own to say, were they in Miss Westburn's situation. She had no fears left of his sincerity, and it was agreed that the next day he should make proposals in form to her father.

The happy pair again joined the company, and with light hearts mingled in the pleasures of the evening.

“ Meantime the song went round, and dance and sport,

Wisdom and friendly talk, successive stole  
Their hours away ; while on the rosy vale  
Love breath’d his infant sighs from anguish free,  
And full replete with bliss, save the sweet pain  
That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.”

Caroline, willing to release herself from the company of the Marquis, which made her sad, refused a dance he wished her to partake in ; and entering the deserted cottage while every one else was engaged on the green, she seated herself at an open casement, and leaning her arm on it, fixed her eyes on the lawn, without being conscious of any thing that was passing there ; she was neither sensible of pleasure from the splendid illuminations that threw an air of en-

chantment round, nor from the melodious strains that struck her ear.

“ ———The noontide day is dark,  
And music discord, when the heart is low.”

While Miss Howard sat musing, Lord William approached the window on the outside: her first intention was to quit it, and return to the company. Lord William and she had scarcely exchanged a syllable since she left him and the Marquis together at Rosefield. Something, however, that she could not combat fixed her to her seat, and still Lord William approached. Coming close to the window, he saw her, stopped short, and was near drawing back; but as if recollecting himself, he came still nearer to it, and said, “ I fear, Miss Howard, you are tired, that you withdraw from the gay company on the lawn.” Caroline looked at him for a minute; she thought she saw a tear tremble in his eye, and the

paleness of his countenance shocked her. She answered, she was not tired, but she found little pleasure in the gay scene ; “ And yet,” cried she, “ I do not speak truth ; I enjoy it, as I truly hope this evening will be productive of much happiness to my dear Catherine.”—“ I hope it will,” replied Lord William ; “ I think she is a charming girl, and Miss Howard selecting her for her friend, is to me the greatest proof of her excellence.”—“ I am not clear-sighted,” replied Caroline, “ in discerning merit ; I can be deceived, and must in future be cautious in my choice of friends.” While she uttered these words, a sickly smile spread over her face, that seemed to say, “ I would rather weep than smile.” Lord William was cut to the heart ; and leaning with his arms folded on the outside of the window, and looking earnestly in her face, he said with a deep sigh, “ It

is indeed true, Miss Howard, that you may be deceived."

Silence ensued on both sides for some time, and Caroline not venturing to meet his eyes, looked down. At length Lord William said, "We leave Rosefield to-morrow, and my poor unhappy brother is in despair; he dares not speak to you again on a subject you have prohibited; but he has besought me, Miss Howard" (and here Lord William could not conceal his agitation) "to solicit you in his favour, to entreat you will at least take a little time to consider his situation, to weigh his love, and not so suddenly, so decidedly to reject him. He will wait any time; he will do all you wish; he will relinquish the transport of seeing you, if you will give him the smallest hope, that at a future day you may be more favourable to him."—"Give him hope!" cried Caroline, with energy (raising her eyes, and fixing them

on Lord William) : “ does Lord William wish me to give him hope ? to deceive his brother ? to undo myself ? How shameful ! how scandalous would my conduct be, were I not as decided as fate with the Marquis ! I have told him what I now repeat, what I would repeat before the whole world—my hand and my heart must be given together, and my heart can never be his. I will not trifle with his generous nature ; and if he cannot treat me only as a friend, I shall see him no more.” Here she again threw her eyes on the ground, or she must have discovered in Lord William’s countenance a thousand contending passions : love, admiration, and joy, mingled with the sadness so deeply imprinted on it, by turns gave animation or languor to that face which impressed every beholder with pleasure. “ And is this your answer to my poor brother, Miss Howard ? and do you doom me to be the

bearer? I cannot give it him; I cannot make him so wretched; I would sacrifice my life to his happiness; I know not what I could refuse him; to secure his felicity, I would even relinquish my own: do not then take offence at my so eternally soliciting you in his favour."

These words had a strange effect on Caroline; she wished to understand their precise meaning, but she did not choose to ask Lord William. Again they were both silent, and both embarrassed, when Miss Howard said, "It is best, my Lord, to put an end to this conversation; I have given my answer; I hope I shall meet no further persecution, and that my poor heart may be left in peace." She could no longer restrain her tears: Lord William was deeply distressed, declaring he should never forgive himself for having called forth these tears (he could scarcely suppress his own): "I will tell my brother the whole of our

conversation, Miss Howard; I grieve for what he must endure, but I will not torment you more.”—“ I beseech you not, my Lord,” replied Caroline, rising from the window. “ Stay, Miss Howard, one moment stay.”

Caroline listened not to his entreaty, but hastily leaving the cottage, joined Catherine and Lord Ravensworth, who were coming in search of her.: the latter whispered to her his success with her friend. Her friendly heart rejoiced in it, and affectionately pressing the hands of both the lovers in hers, she said all that it dictated upon the occasion. “ Happy as I now am, my dear Miss Howard,” said the Earl, “ I have still a wish, and an anxious one, to gratify.”—“ Oh, shameful! you are never to be satisfied, if you have now any thing on earth to desire.”—“ I have then,” replied he, “ one wish, that, when answered, will be the greatest addition to



Catherine's happiness and mine. As you will not guess it, I must tell you : it is to see you united to the chosen of your heart."—"You will never see me married," replied Caroline, colouring violently ; "I have not the least inclination to change my present state ; but be assured, Lord Ravensworth, I am grateful for your friendship."—"Would I could give you, Caroline, (will you allow me to call you by your name?)—would I could give you some effectual proof of the friendship I feel for you ; I grieve to see the depression of your spirits and the paleness of your cheek. Look forward to happier hours," cried he, taking her hand ; "I am convinced they will arrive ; but I beseech you, acquire more command of your feelings, or this ingenuous countenance will betray you : remember that Catherine and I devote ourselves to your service ; command our friendship whenever you may want it."

Caroline looked all gratitude, but was silent. Was her heart read by Lord Ravensworth, she feared, yet wished to know. “You are honourable,” continued Lord Ravensworth, “in so decidedly rejecting the Marquis; I hope every thing for you; time may produce extraordinary changes with men the most attached. Love, if not returned, must be extinguished: rally your spirits, my charming friend, and look to a bright futurity.”

Caroline, covered with confusion, stood between her friends, without uttering a word, and was relieved by the approach of Mr. and Mrs. Westburn. “So, Miss Howard,” said Mr. Westburn, “you are not satisfied with robbing every one who approaches you of his heart, but you must rob me of my daughter? Lady Gertrude and Mrs. Westburn have settled that she goes to London with you; and I am to be left

in the country without a soul to mind me, to humour me when I am cross, to attend to all my whims and caprices.” —“ How can you give such a character of yourself to Miss Howard, my dear father ?” said Catherine. “ Oh !” cried Caroline with gaiety, “ it is perceiving your strange whims and ill temper that makes us all anxious to carry Catherine where she cannot feel their influence ; she, poor soul ! must be so miserable with such rigid parents, that I hope she will soon break her chains.” —“ And put on others,” interrupted Lord Ravensworth : “ that is my barbarous wish.” —“ Dear Catherine,” said Caroline, “ how cruelly you are treated by these tyrants ! let us leave them ; come down this walk with me ; nothing can be more beautiful and brilliant than the lighting of it.”

The friends walked away ; and Lord Ravensworth suffered them to depart alone, as, instead of waiting for the

morning, he took the present opportunity of speaking to Mr. and Mrs. Westburn. A short time settled every thing to his wishes; they gladly accepted a man they so highly esteemed, and who they could not doubt would make their beloved child happy. The Earl again sought the fair friends, and declared his intention of going to London the same day they did. "Your father," said he, turning to Catherine with an arch smile, "thinks a guardian may be necessary to you in the metropolis; and judging me old enough and wise enough for the charge, has deputed me yours."

Thus passed the hours at the cottage; and though we neither know the friendships or the loves of the strangers that composed the company, we have no doubt but the cottage, the conservatory, the lawn, and the walks, were conscious and silent witnesses that night of many a tender tale.

“Soft sigh’d the lute ; the tender voice was heard  
Warbling the varied heart ; the woodlands round  
Applied their quire ; and winds and waters flow’d  
In consonance.”

Supper was prepared in the cottage ; and, when over, dancing was again renewed. Miss Howard, though surprised at Lord William’s requesting her to lead up, could not refuse ; and with a hand trembling equally with hers, he led her to the set, where next them stood the Marquis with Catherine. Notwithstanding her tremour, she danced divinely, and Lord William never appeared to more advantage ; and we believe that the ball at Gibraltar, the walk upon the rock, the voyage to England, and many things that had passed in Italy, were fresh in their minds : that Caroline’s memory was a tenacious one, her lovely cheek declared.

“ The rising colours, never at a stay,  
Run here and there, and flush, and fade away.  
Delightful change ! Thus Indian iv’ry shews,  
Which with the bord’ring paint of purple glows,  
Or lilies damask’d by the neighb’ring rose.” }

The Duke was so highly gratified with his entertainment, that he never considered he was the next day to take a long journey ; and till it grew very late, no one thought of quitting this delightful abode. At length the dying lamps and the sleepy musicians told the hour ; and all returned to their homes, charmed with the amusements of the evening, and more than ever with Lord Ravensworth.

## CHAP. XXVII.

“ Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily.”

DRYDEN.

MORE exhausted by the anxiety of her mind, and by the fatal passion that secretly consumed her, than by the exercise of the evening, Caroline lay down at the late hour she returned from the Grove, and hoped to procure some hours' repose; but even in sleep she could not banish Lord William's idea: he presented himself under many forms—now the fond lover; then the perfidious one; sometimes he interceded for his brother, then accused her of partiality to that same brother; sometimes she saw him far distant on the deck of a ship, tossed by the waves, and casting a melancholy

look towards the desert shore on which she stood,

“Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining.”

Soon the brothers appeared together, and both with smiles invited her to follow them. Restless, and wearied with the constant return of these visions, she half awoke, then roused herself entirely, and seeing a ray of light appear through her bed-curtain, she rose softly, not to disturb Catherine, and throwing a wrapping-gown over her, repaired to her dressing-room, and going to the window, found that the day was just breaking. She felt a feverish heat oppress her, opened the lattice, and sat down to enjoy the cool morning breeze, and the balmy fragrance of the hawthorns that were coming into bloom.

The lark was just rising from the meadow, and “ascending up to Heaven’s gates, bore on his wings and in his



notes" his great Creator's praise. Miss Howard listened with delight to his early orisons, and poured forth her pious prayers and praises, with all animated nature awaking from the silence of the night, to that great Being, who is the same in darkness and in light, who protects and blesses all that he has formed. "O Almighty Power!" cried she, "teach me to be content, and grateful for the good thou givest, and never to desire aught that cannot be obtained with virtue and honour: save me from ill, and from the peril of too much confidence in myself."

The sun was still below the horizon; and Miss Howard, recollecting that she could see it rise in all its splendour at the ruins, and believing that a walk would be of use to her, dressed herself, and throwing on her cloak and veil, went into her bed-chamber, where, finding Catherine in a comfortable sleep, she

would not disturb her, but softly closing the door after her, advanced into the gallery that passed by her dressing-room, and descending a small staircase that led to the garden, she took her way through it to her beloved ruins. She found the cottager's wife just risen, and at her door; the woman started on seeing her, and wondered why a lady, who could sleep as long as she liked, should leave her bed so early, to wander in a place she could find no pleasure in visiting. Caroline smiled at her expressions of surprise, saying, she had got a headach with dancing the night before; she could not sleep, and thought a walk would do her good: "besides," said she, "I long to see the sun rise from the abbey; I am told it is a most beautiful sight."—"We poor folk that live always in the country think it so," answered the woman; "but indeed, Miss, I never thought a town lady would wish to see

it. I believe, however, you are not one of that sort. As to me," continued she, "I never was but once in London, and I would not go there again for the whole world."—"Why?" asked Caroline. "I thought myself in no better than a prison, my Lady; I was sure I should be run over every moment, as neither horses and carriages, men or women, had room to pass; but what was worst of all was, the horrid smells, that I protest made me ready to faint, though Heaven knows I am stout enough. I never was so happy as when I got back to the fresh air, my dear little garden, and these sweet hawthorn-bushes." While she talked thus, she was gathering the best sweets her little garden in front of the cottage contained; and tying them up in a beautiful nosegay, she begged her dear young lady to wear them. Caroline graciously took them, and thanked her. "You must

not go," cried the good woman, "till you take a draught of milk; mine is excellent, and I have a nice cake I baked last night; you must eat a morsel; you are out too early, and you look as white as my apron."

Caroline entered the cottage, where she found perfect neatness, and the infants of this industrious woman, all still asleep, rosy as cherubs, with little round faces, smiling in their slumbers, so happy and contented were their innocent hearts. Miss Howard did not refuse her kind hostess's offer; she drank the milk, and ate some of the cake, both of which she found delicious: and bidding her good morning, with thanks for her nice breakfast, was leaving the cottage, when the good creature said, "Dear, my young lady, surely you are not going to sing and play, and perish yourself to death, in the old abbey at this hour?"—"I shall not remain long," replied Catherine;

“ you need not be at the trouble of bringing my harp this morning.” Saying this, she ascended the stile, and passing the little meadow, was soon at her favourite retreat. She was amply rewarded for so early leaving her bed. The sun was now rising in unclouded glory ; she drew one of the rustic seats to the entrance of the cloister, and sat down to contemplate and enjoy the finest sight in the universe. As the bright orb of day rose in the heavens, the silence that had prevailed at early dawn was succeeded by cheerful noises from the surrounding country. The cattle bellowed in the distant fields : she heard the neighing of the horses, the tinkling of the sheep-bells ; the birds that built their nests in the old abbey now rustled through the ivy, and were instantly on the wing, and filling the air with their melodious notes. Caroline, casting her lovely eyes around, felt the influence of

this joyous scene, and her heart was in part lightened of the weight which oppressed it on her leaving Rosefield. She contemplated the still remaining walls of the once magnificent fabric, now in its last decay, and glanced her eye where it was visible the remains lay of many of its cloistered saints. She could not behold them without veneration; and turning to the spot that marked their graves, she said aloud, "Peace be to your ashes, honoured shades! you once perhaps enjoyed these scenes as I do now."

' The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
' The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,  
' The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
' No more shall rouse you from your lowly bed.'

But holy was your lives, and great, I hope, is your reward. May I, by contemplating on the life you led, secure my own from error!"

She again turned towards the entrance

of the cloister, and, to her amazement, beheld Lord William standing close to it, his arms folded, and his eyes riveted on her. She started ! he advanced towards her, saying, “ I hope Miss Howard will excuse this intrusion ; it was not intended ; I did not know I should have the happiness of finding her here.” His soft and melancholy voice, the tenderness that was expressed in his mild blue eye ; and his so sudden appearance, surprised and overcame Caroline to such a degree, that, not able to support herself, she sat down on the seat she had not long quitted. She spoke not ; and Lord William approached, and standing before her, said, “ Are you offended with me for thus breaking in on your retirement ? I hoped I had left you in a sweet sleep at Rosefield ; as I passed the garden, I looked up to your windows, and they were closed.” He stopped for a moment, and then proceeded : “ Drawn by

the beauty of the morning, and having passed a restless night, I believed a walk in the open air would be of service to me; and I chose this spot, as I had been so charmed with it the first time I was here.”—“The first time!” cried Caroline: “you were only here once?”—“Yes, I was here at almost as early an hour as this, the morning after my arrival.”

Caroline looked at him, but said not a word. She would have left the abbey, but she felt if she rose from her seat she had not the power to walk without support, and she wished to dispense with any assistance from Lord William. He drew a seat next hers, and sat down. They were both silent for some minutes; Caroline had turned her head from him as much as she could without affectation. At last Lord William renewed the conversation. “I see, Miss Howard, I am doomed to



draw your displeasure on me ; and Heaven knows I would deprecate it with my life. You are angry at this intrusion, and I fear what I have to say will give you farther offence." Caroline collected her scattered spirits, and turning to him, replied, " I cannot think, my Lord, why you suppose me offended ; you have accounted for your intrusion, and I must always believe Lord William Hume speaks truth. You say you have been here alone ; if so, you only shew your taste in a second time visiting so charming a spot ; and this morning the prospect is uncommonly lovely."

Poor Caroline had made a great effort ; she had struggled to appear indifferent to Lord William ; but seeing herself alone with him, and considering the bad terms they had been on, or rather no terms at all, she dreaded an explanation in any way, and would have given the world to have been safely

lodged at Rosefield. "I rejoice, Miss Howard, that you acquit me of imposing my company on you." Caroline's lip quivered; she could scarcely suppress a tear. He continued: "But I fear, Madam, you will accuse me of impertinently interfering, if I once more mention my wretched brother. Could you know his distress, his misery, you would surely pity him. His soul doats on you. Look with compassion on him, Miss Howard; do not drive him to distraction; you can never be united to a better, a more amiable man." He paused, and for some minutes there was a dead silence; when Caroline, raising her eyes from the ground, and throwing a good deal of dignity into her manner, replied, "I thank you, my Lord, for your advice, and the trouble you have taken to recommend your brother to me. I wanted no one to point out Lord Beaumont's merits; I

am sensible of them : but I have already given my answer. Never will I marry him : not the smallest shadow of hope will I give him. My parents leave my choice free, and that freedom I will maintain with my life. I therefore request, my Lord, you will not again take the trouble of interfering in this business. When I am again tormented (pardon the expression), it must be the last time we ever converse on any subject.”—

“Heavens ! Caroline,” exclaimed Lord William, “what have I done to deserve this severity ? Can you discard me thus ?” and he burst into an agony of tears. Miss Howard, astonished and terrified, and scarcely believing what she saw and heard, repeated, “Discard you, Lord William !—What do you mean ?”—“I mean,” cried he, “that my heart is almost broken, and your severity is a dreadful stroke indeed !”—

“I meant not to be severe,” replied

she, in a faltering accent ; “ I ask your pardon if I appeared so ; I only wished to put a stop to that hateful subject, your brother’s love. I never, never, will listen to it,” added she, rising, though her trembling limbs almost refused their office.

Lord William also rose from his seat, and seizing her hand, entreated to be forgiven. “ Pardon me, Caroline ; restore me to your good opinion, and I shall die in peace. Oh ! could you read my heart, you would see what tortures it has endured.” The hand he held was tenderly pressed in his, and Miss Howard, too much distressed and affected to leave the abbey, or support herself, was under the necessity of resuming her seat. She withdrew her hand, and Lord William threw himself at her feet again to entreat forgiveness. “ You have it,” cried she, covering her face with her hands, to conceal the tears

that rolled from her eyes; “you have my pardon for all your past conduct. I beseech you rise, and leave me to myself; this is no posture for me to see Lady Almeria’s affianced husband in.”—“Lady Almeria’s affianced husband!” repeated Lord William, with surprise and agitation, starting from the ground, and again taking his seat by Caroline. “In the name of Heaven! who could tell you such an untruth? Inform me, I beseech you.”—“All London knows it,” answered Caroline, still concealing her face. “They know a falsehood then,” cried Lord William (gently taking her hand, and drawing it from her lovely cheek), “a cursed falsehood. O Caroline! I hate, I detest, Lady Almeria. Had she been the greatest beauty in the universe, her conduct to you, and her malice at Lord Ravensworth’s, would have made her odious to me. But could you listen to such false-

hood—you who should have known my heart? O Caroline! no other form of beauty but yours could attract my attention for a moment;—no heart could I prize but yours. Once I hoped to have secured it my own; to have devoted my life to you; to have seen you as happy as you deserve to be, and to be the chief means of making you so."

The hand, that Caroline had still held over her eyes, now fell almost lifeless on her lap; the blood forsook her face, and she fell fainting on the seat in which she sat. Lord William, dreadfully alarmed, lifted her in his arms, and carried her outside the cloister; the fresh morning air brought back her fleeting senses. She gave him her hand, and smiling through her tears, bid him not be alarmed, as she was better. He still held her in his arms, and she motioned to him to draw the

seat near the door; he did so, placed her in it, and flew down the meadow to the cottage for a glass of water; he soon returned with it, and found Caroline shedding a copious shower of tears; he again threw himself at her feet, and held her hands in his. Soon an explanation ensued on both sides; and Lord William's delight was extreme at the conviction that Miss Howard's faintness had proceeded from the unexpected joy she felt, at finding his sentiments were those of love and truth towards her. Every thing that had formerly interested them was repeated by each. Every feeling of their hearts was communicated, and a thousand vows of everlasting love were exchanged. A blissful hour flew on downy wings, when Lord William recollecting himself, started from the ground where he had sat at Caroline's feet, and groaned aloud. "How you

terrify me, Lord William!" cries the agitated girl; "what is it so distresses you?"—"My brother, my wretched brother! My angel Caroline, can I bear his sufferings? can I stab him to the heart, by telling him our love?"

He walked about in agony; he wrung his hands, and a cold sweat trickled from his forehead. He was roused from this transport of passion by a deep and heavy sigh from Caroline, and seeing her again near fainting. He now flew to her, and clasping her in his arms, called her by every tender name he could think of; entreated her to be comforted, and he would endeavour not to torment her thus. She soon recovered animation and speech, and begged him to sit calmly down by her; he obeyed, gazing on her pale face with anguish and delight. It was now her turn to sooth; and lifting her soft eyes to his, and taking his hand in hers, she



said, " Dear Lord William, I should be a very hypocrite should I pretend to deny the joy it gives me to know I am in possession of your heart, of the only heart I have ever wished to captivate; mine has been yours from almost infancy, and shall be yours eternally; neither time nor misfortune can have power over it. Should we be separated as far as the extremity of the world, it should there fly to you; it relies, it depends on you for a return of all its love; it will know no fear, no jealousy, no doubt of your truth; but if I expect your constant affection, I must prove that I am worthy of it. I will not degrade you or myself by acting wrong. I admire your conduct to your brother; the more it has cost you, the more I ought to esteem you for it. Your attachment to me must never lessen your fraternal affection; all that has passed this morning must be confined to our own

bosoms ; a thick veil must hide our secret from the world, till we can avow it with honour. No earthly power could prevail with me to bring dissension into your family, to poison the present happiness of the Duke and Duchess, and to disunite you and your amiable brother. Till he is married to a woman, his own choice, and till he can feel no pain from seeing me your wife, I never will be so. In this determination I am as firmly fixed, as I was in refusing the Marquis. I know that at present our prospect is a gloomy one, and that we shall both be severely distressed ; but honour, virtue, and every sacred tie forbid any other conduct : and never could my heart know peace, if I was not conscious you must applaud my actions."

Lord William listened to all she said, in almost breathless agony. Love lamented, virtue approved, and he acquiesced in all

Caroline desired. He again threw himself at her feet ; he covered her hands with kisses, he pressed them to his heart ; he called her the guardian of his virtue and his honour. A scene too tender for description ensued :

“ They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.”

“ They stood in silence, in their beauty, like two young trees of the plain, when the shower of spring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.”

At length, alarmed at the lateness of the hour, and fearful of any person finding them in this situation, they agreed to separate, and return to the house. Caroline declared her intention of not seeing him again till they met in London, as she wished not to take leave of him before witnesses, nor to encounter the Marquis when it was possible to avoid him. Adieus were so often repeated, that Caroline, fearful

of a discovery, broke from Lord William, and entreating him to remain behind till she reached the house, slowly, and often looking back, she crossed the meadow, passed unseen through the pleasure-grounds, and reaching her apartment, found Catherine still asleep. She undressed, and retired to her own bed to meditate, not to sleep; and when her maid called her, she desired her to tell her mother she was tired, and would not rise till late. Catherine, fearful of her not being well from the order she had given, would not allow any one to disturb her; and when she entered her room at a late hour, she had the pleasure of hearing, that the Duke, his sons, and Mr. Lindsey, had been some time on their journey; and she found, to her infinite relief, that Lord Ravensworth and Mr. and Mr. Westburn were to dine at Rosefield.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

" Say, - - - - what can London boast,  
To pay thee for the pleasure lost,  
The health to-day resign'd?  
When Spring from this her fav'rite scat  
Bad Winter hasten his retreat,  
And met the western wind ?"

THE departure of the Duke and his sons was the greatest relief to Miss Howard; it gave her time to bring her mind to some degree of composure, and to lay down a plan for her future conduct. At first the idea presented itself of a full disclosure of her sentiments to her father and mother, and to have no reserve to them on the past. While she doubted Lord William's truth, her heart shrunk from the in-

spection of these foud parents ; to own she had given her affections to one who slighted them, was beyond her power : but now she wished to repose in the tender bosom of her mother, all her hopes and fears ; and she was at Lady Gertrude's chamber door, her hand on the lock, when she reflected, that, at present, silence would be most prudent. Should Mr. Howard and her mother know the whole, it could only make them miserable ; they would see her near prospect of happiness in a married state was quite cut off. It would embarrass their behaviour both to the Marquis and Lord William ; and she chiefly feared, that, seeing little hope of an union with the latter, they might urge (though not force) her to relinquish his acquaintance, and forbid his visits, which might lead to some disagreeable catastrophe. She softly withdrew to her own apartment, where she called

herself to a strict account for the conduct of her whole life: and the innocent being found nothing to accuse herself of, but too fervent an attachment to Lord William. “And yet,” thought she, “can I do wrong in devoting myself to him who has so long bestowed his fondest affections on me, who is all tenderness and truth, and yet preserves his honour to his brother? No, Lord William, I can never do wrong in loving you, for it is loving virtue. Till we can unite our fate with honour to both, I desire no happiness but what the consciousness of being devoted to you will inspire; no admiration, no praise, no flattery, but yours, can touch my heart, or give me a moment’s pleasure. I shall soon be surrounded with gaiety and splendour; my secret soul will sicken at it where you are not; no eye can I wish to charm but yours.” Then considering for a few

minutes, she said, " To be worthy of you, I also must be honourable ; I must guard my words, my looks ; conceal the fond affection that glows at my heart, under cold civility ; not to wound those I most love and revere ; not to scatter mischiefs in a family I ought to respect ; or be the cause of enmity between two such brothers."

Thus did Caroline strengthen her mind against a weakness she dreaded, and saw with less terror than she had done, the preparations that were making for their return to town. It was agreed on by the three families, Lord Ravensworth's, Mr. Westburn's, and Mr. Howard's, that the short time they remained in the country they would spend together ; and Mr. and Mrs. Westburn promised the Earl, that as soon as the lawyers were prepared, they would go for some days to London to see their daughter united to him, and insisted



on their returning with them after the ceremony into Hampshire. Lord Ravensworth agreed to this, provided they took up their abode with him while they remained in London. This they consented to with pleasure; it relieved Mrs. Westburn from all trouble, and her health was too delicate to admit of any exertion. The air of a town disagreed with her; and Lord Ravensworth, who was sincerely attached to her, declared she should in his house do exactly as suited her health and her pleasure.

The few days they remained in Hampshire were of much use to Caroline. Her eyes recovered their usual brightness; the carnation and the lily again bloomed in her complexion; her air was cheerful, her conversation lively; and when she touched her harp, not only soft and pathetic sounds were produced, but lively, animated ones. What caused the roses to bloom again:

in her cheek, her eye to sparkle? Was it the fine air of Hampshire?—was it the sea-breeze that strengthened her frame, and as it once bestowed beauty on the Mother of the Loves, now embellished Caroline? — No, my fair readers—no. It was a heart at ease that shone in her lovely face; it was that pure and faithful heart, meeting with a kindred mind, and being satisfied of its truth, and sensible of its value, that threw almost a glory round this charming girl. This change did not pass unnoticed. Catherine sometimes imagined it was produced by the pleasure her friend felt in her now recovered happiness. Lord Ravensworth was nearer the mark, but was silent even to Catherine. He saw Caroline standing on a precipice, and was assured prudence only could save her. Knowing men, he had a hope that the Marquis might be tired of a vain pursuit, and leave her

to make a choice more congenial to her heart ; but till he did so, Lord Ravensworth feared much distress and uneasiness of mind would fall to Miss Howard's lot. He thought silence for the present was the best, but was decided to watch every opportunity of being useful to one he so highly esteemed. Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude, happy in the change they saw in their child, attributed it to their acquiescence in her rejecting those lovers she could not like ; and seeing her so captivating, they felt no uneasiness for her future settlement.

The few days they remained in Hampshire, rolled on imperceptibly, and were passed agreeably. It was now May, and Mr. Howard grieved to leave his little Paradise when it was coming into beauty ; but Lady Gertrude thought only of the happiness she should feel in again beholding Lord Bellengen.

The evening previous to their departure, Miss Westburn went, attended by Lord Ravensworth, to take leave of her parents; Caroline excused herself from being of the party, that she might pay a last visit to the old abbey, now rendered more pleasing than ever, by its being the spot where she had received from Lord William those assurances of love and constancy, which restored her to comparative happiness. When her friends quitted Rosefield, she set out on her walk, passed the stile without meeting the cottagers, and ascended the rising ground to the abbey, where she not only enjoyed the lovely view, but indulged in half an hour's contemplation on her present situation. The cloister, the holy walls that still surrounded this sacred spot, brought the convent at Naples, and the kind Mother Abbess, to her remembrance. She sighed at thinking she might now be

the inhabitant of another world ; sensibility and affection dropped a tear at her supposed death. With gratitude, Caroline recollected the lessons she had given her. “ Has she not,” cried she, “ advised me to guard against the passion of love, and told me how fatal it might prove if not kept within due bounds, within the bounds of reason and virtue ? She did not educate me for a convent, but for the world in which she knew I must one day live. Her understanding was strong, her judgment good. Her instructions shall not be thrown away on me ; the best return I can make my dear Beatrice is, to obey her. If spirits have any thing to do with this lower world, if they are allowed to watch over what they loved on earth, she shall see her Caroline will never swerve from the path of virtue she has traced out for her. Dreadful must have been her sorrows ! I cannot

doubt but they must have proceeded from a fatal passion. Oh ! if she is now in the world of spirits, may she enjoy all that Heaven can give ! Whatever faults she committed, surely the dreadful penances she inflicted on herself, her sufferings of mind and body, must have atoned them. Alas ! my dear Beatrice, shall I see you no more ?”

Miss Howard, lost in her own reflections, would have remained a long time at the abbey, had not the cottager’s wife come to inform her, that Lady Gertrude had sent to desire she would return home, as she had received some letters she wished to shew her. Caroline’s heart palpitated. What could these letters be ? and from whom ? At first she believed it might be something from Lord William, but a moment’s reflection convinced her it could not be so ; and taking hold of the cottager’s arm, she swiftly crossed the meadow.

She stopped, however, to give directions for having her harp and music taken to the house, as a safer place, while she remained in town. Dorcas (so the woman was called) begged she would walk into her little room for a moment, as she was almost breathless with the haste she had made. "Lord! my dear young Lady, don't frighten yourself, there is nothing in the world the matter; it is only some pleasant thing her good Ladyship has to tell you, for John was gay and merry when he come down to me; and you know, he would be very mulloncholy indeed, if any thing vexed your mother; he that has been her old favourite servant so many long years, that came with her from her own country, that is, you may say, at the end of the world."

Caroline felt the comfort Dorcas gave her, but could not help smiling at her loquacity. She then gave the orders

she intended respecting her harp and music, which the good woman was now carefully dusting. "See here, my Lady, don't go till you examine your instrument; it is all as safe and sound as can be, all but one of the knots of riband, and I hope you are not angry about it; indeed, indeed, I was not in fault."—"I am not in the least angry, Dorcas," said Caroline; "the poor little child, when she took it, never thought she was doing any mischief."—"Why, my dear young Lady! is that all you know about the knot? Why, who could say the child took it? I would have flogged her to pieces, if she had but laid her finger on your harp. No, no; my child knows better things, I assure you, though she is a poor body's."

Caroline was surprised, but knew it was in vain to speak till Dorcas had done; and when there was a moment of silence, she said, "Your husband



told me, your little girl pulled it off; and had made it so dirty, that he threw it into the fire in a passion; I can easily get another, so don't make yourself uneasy, Dorcas."—"Well, I vow now, that is good; my husband has not told you one word of truth; and, what is more, he knew that at the time. I say, the child never put finger on the harp;—but murder will out." Then, lowering her voice, and looking round to see that there was no one listening, she said, "If you must know the truth (but I hope you won't take notice, as the gentleman gave my husband a piece of gold to keep the secret), it was that fine, beautiful young Lord, that stole it from the harp one morning—he that run in such a fright for a glass of water for you when you were ill at them nasty ruins, with getting up before cock-crow, and fasting so long. Now this is the whole truth; and I would not have told

you a word, but I could not have my poor child put in fault for nothing ; and so I told her father, though he said I was a fool for my pains."

Miss Howard's face was covered with blushes ; she was inwardly delighted with what she had heard (for trifles in the eye of love acquire the greatest value ; lovers are endowed with the power of the Cretan king, and turn all they wish to gold). Our heroine, however, assured the good woman, she should not take notice to any one of such a folly, and that she looked on her quite free from blame ; and making her a handsome present, she left the cottage, followed by Dorcas's prayers and blessings.

Caroline was soon in the drawing-room at Rosefield, and agreeably surprised at finding nothing in the countenances of her parents to alarm her. She looked hurried and warm, from her

walk. Lady Gertrude said, "My dear child, your father and I could know nothing that would give you pleasure, without wishing instantly to communicate it to you. We have had letters from your brother, and we hope soon to see him."—"Oh! my dear Henry, is he come?" cried Caroline. "No," answered Mr. Howard, "he cannot leave St. Helena for some time; the worthy Mr. Burton died there of a fever, when they were on their passage home. Your brother stays to pay proper attention to the remains of so good a friend. Sorrow and joy go hand in hand in this world. Mr. Burton has left your brother a noble fortune, but I grieve that his death deprives me of the pleasure I should take in shewing him my gratitude for his fatherly care of my Henry."

Caroline's joy on her brother's account was checked by seeing her mother

deeply affected. Lady Gertrude had too good a heart not to be grateful to Mr. Burton for his friendship, and sincerely to lament his death at the moment they all expected his return in health and prosperity. She felt, also, how much it would afflict her father to lose a friend he so truly loved. "The letter from your brother," said Mr. Howard, "is come through Lord Belangen. Henry has been an affectionate brother to you, my child. Mr. Burton has left him a fortune of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and he insists on your acceptance of fifty. Mr. Burton's fortune was almost all in the English funds, and here is your brother's draught for what he has so generously bestowed on you."—"Generously indeed has Henry acted towards me! how noble, how disinterested he is! but I cannot take so large a sum; I cannot rob him." Her father and mother both

embraced her, telling her she ought to accept her brother's kindness ; he could afford to do what he had done for her, and a refusal would only hurt and grieve him. Caroline was greatly affected ; she shed tears of affection and gratitude to this loved brother, who had rendered her so rich ; and she secretly thought she was now a match in point of fortune for Lord William, and was gratified to find herself in wealth little inferior to Lady Almeria.

Our readers may suppose that the agitation this news produced did not soon subside. Mr. Burton was lamented, Henry talked over :—was he grown ?—were his features the same ?—were his manners unchanged ?—was he as agreeable, had the same charming spirits, as when he left England ? In this manner a couple of hours were spent. Lord Bellengen's letter was read over twenty times ; and as he declared his intention

of soon following it, Lady Gertrude was extremely anxious to get to London.

In the midst of this interesting conversation, Lord Ravensworth and Miss Westburn returned, and when informed of the contents of the packets that had arrived, they could scarcely find words to express the delight they felt at Henry's good fortune, and his generous conduct to his charming sister. To do Caroline justice, we must declare she found more gratification in the unchanged affection of her brother, than in being mistress of the large fortune he bestowed upon her. At an early hour the next morning, the whole party left Rosefield for the metropolis. During the journey, as they passed by many beautiful seats belonging to the rich and great, they railed against the taste of the present age, for preferring, at the most charming season of the

year, a hot and dirty town for their residence, to a beautiful, cultivated, and blooming country. We shall leave them to their invective; they are just like the rest of the world, doing what they abuse their neighbours for; and as

“On Fancy’s airy horse we ride,”

get to London before them, take a peep into the Duke of Cathmore’s house, and see what he and his sons have been about since they quitted Hampshire.

We left Lord William at the ruins, where he remained till he thought Miss Howard had gained her own apartment; when he took his solitary walk to Rosefield. He had then time to reflect on the occurrences of the morning. It was not in human nature to love as he did, and not find cause for happiness and exultation in the assurance he had of Caroline’s perfect attachment; but his brother’s misery pressed sore upon

his heart: and, anxious to mitigate it as much as in him lay, he determined to keep a strict watch on his own conduct towards the beloved of his soul. He even believed he could give up the hope of any happiness, but that of being dear to her, rather than the Marquis should suffer the torture a knowledge of their hidden passion would give him. In this mood he met the Duke at the entrance of Rosefield, who viewed him with a scrutinizing eye, and they entered the breakfast-room together. Caroline's absence was a real relief to Lord William, but it extremely deranged the Marquis, and he told his brother he was satisfied she kept her chamber to avoid seeing him. Obligated to submit to his fate, and leave Mr. Howard's hospitable mansion without bidding farewell to her he adored, he returned to London in wretched spirits, his only consolation, that he should



soon have an opportunity of again trying his fate with Miss Howard ; to him it was a thing impossible to give up the pursuit while a shadow of hope remained : and what lover will not catch at a shadow ? Dejection still sat on Lord William's countenance, though his heart had thrown off a dreadful load.

They arrived at a late hour in Grosvenor Square, and found the Duchess and Lady Emily at home ; the former was distressed by seeing Lord William with the appearance of as delicate health as when he left town ; and she plainly perceived a visible change in the Marquis. A few friends were invited to supper that night, and among the rest, Captain Biron and Fitzroy. Lady Emily received her cousins with affection ; she was in great spirits, asked most warmly for Miss Howard, and rejoiced that she was returning to town.

The Marquis saw with pleasure that she directed all her shafts against Fitzroy, who was not ignorant that he was the favoured object. She was engaging, pretty, and amiable; and Fitzroy found some alleviation of his recent disappointment in her conversation, which could not fail to please. Mr. Lindsey, as usual, took up his abode at the Duke's; and since his return from abroad, the Duchess, knowing her obligations on her sons' account, treated him with kindness and respect.

When the Duke and Duchess were alone, Her Grace mentioned her uneasiness on Lord William's account. The Duke, not wishing to enlighten her on so delicate a subject, laughed at her fears, declaring, he was much recovered in looks and spirits. He then changed the conversation to the Marquis's attachment to Miss Howard: "Our son will inform you to-morrow,

my love, of his disappointment ; I fear, however, he will not relinquish the pursuit, and it will be to no purpose, or I much mistake the young lady's character." The Duchess was all astonishment ; she conceived it quite impossible that any woman in England should refuse Lord Beaumont ; and she felt extremely indignant at the idea of Miss Howard's doing so. She declared, it was a match would make her miserable ;—undoubtedly Miss Howard's family was unexceptionable, and she was very handsome ; but her fortune was nothing, which would be a bad thing for her son. She was certain Miss Howard only refused him to enhance her own value, and make him more in love with her. Tears of passion and pride stopped her utterance for some time ; at length she cried, sobbing, " He had fitter marry Lady Emily, who is just all he could wish.

What a miserable affair, that Beaumont should meet this girl in Italy, to frustrate all my schemes!"

The Duke very calmly walked about the room, till her anger and tears subsided, and then told her, as to Miss Howard, she might set her heart perfectly at ease. She was not inclined to marry, and he was well convinced (he said this with a sigh), Lord Beaumont never would be her choice; "but she will have offers enough, I promise you," said the Duke. "Don't afflict yourself on Emily's account, my dear Duchess; it seems to me that your niece will assert her own rights, and choose a husband to please herself. She has no wish to marry either of *your* sons; she has been bred up with them, and looks on them as brothers." — "I fear indeed," returned the Duchess, "that Emily has not a proper pride; she absolutely encourages Fitzroy." —

“And can she do better?” replied the Duke. “He is a charming young man, and I should rejoice to see her married so happily, since she and Beaumont cannot like each other.”—“Oh!” cried the Duchess, “he has no title; he is only the younger son of a peer.”—“My dear Elinor,” answered the Duke, “will you, to your latest hour, be the victim of pride? And will you, who have so good an understanding, see things through so false a medium? Rank and riches are great blessings, but they do not make up the entire sum of man’s happiness. In marriage, real affection, congenial minds, and tempers that agree, are the first things to be thought of. Those that desire only to make a convenient marriage, are, sooner or later, taught their own folly, and secretly acknowledge, that great fortune and high birth possess not the magic power a cursory observer

may suppose. I confess to you, Elinor, though you may think me wrong, my wish is, that my sons may marry women calculated to make them happy. I care not about fortune, we have enough. I think too well of them to suppose they would connect themselves with a vulgar or a worthless family. Any amiable young woman of fashion they may choose will always be acceptable to me ; and, I trust, you who are so amiable yourself, will lay aside those foolish prejudices, which in early youth have been instilled into your mind by the faulty education given to most young women of your rank in life."

The Duchess did not much relish this lecture, as she thought it ; her prejudices were not to be conquered. Her opinions continued the same at the end of the Duke's speech, that they had been at the beginning ; but she had too much respect for his understanding,

and, in reality, too much affection for himself, to persist in an argument she knew would vex him. So the poor Duchess merely vexed herself by her pride and erroneous opinions. She well knew that the haughtiness of her character prevented her being loved by those very people most sensible of her amiable qualities; but so inveterate were education and habit, that she remained unchanged.

Nothing material happened for the few days that intervened, before the arrival of the Howards. Lord Ravensworth had written to Lord William to inform him what day they expected to reach London, and he looked to it with sad delight.

"In hell, and earth, and seas, and heaven above,  
Love conquers all, and we must yield to love."

## CHAP. XXIX.

"My child, I feel a tenderness at heart  
 I never felt before ; come near, Mandane,  
 Let me gaze on thee, and indulge the father."

YOUNG.

ON the arrival of the Rosefield family in town, the Marquis and Lord William passed the evening with them ; and Miss Howard was careful to avoid any private conversation with the latter. Hearing from Lord Ravensworth of her brother's generosity, they congratulated her on this acquisition of fortune, and at breakfast the next morning they mentioned it to the Duke. When he and the Duchess were alone, Her Grace declared what she had heard made a great difference in her sentiments respecting Miss Howard, who she now



hoped would not be so silly as to persevere in refusing Lord Beaumont. The Duke persisted in his former opinion, that she never would be his wife.

“Well,” cried the Duchess, “I declare that is very provoking; how could she better dispose of her riches?”—

“Elinor,” replied the Duke, “her heart is a thousand times the value of her fortune, and I hope will go along with it, when she marries.”—“I declare, Duke, I believe you are in love with her yourself; all she does is right in your eyes, even to refusing your son.”—“Certainly, Elinor, I applaud her for rejecting even my son, if she cannot love him.”—“New doctrine,” said the Duchess peevishly. “I cannot but think the Marquis a great match for her.”

The Duke was silent, and the Duchess rang for her carriage, that she and Lady Emily might pay a visit to the

Howards. She flattered herself, that her attentions would tempt Caroline, to bestow her fortune on Lord Beaumont; all-powerful gold had rendered her, in the eyes of this worldly being, an object worth seeking. "Remember," said the Duke, "that Miss Westburn is with Lady Gertrude; she is to be married immediately to Lord Ravensworth."—"Bless me!" exclaimed the Duchess, "how odd, that he should choose her! She never has lived in the fine world in London; how awkward it will be for Lord Ravensworth! He is a most charming man; I wonder he did not make choice of some young woman of fashion here."—"I should wonder if he had," replied the Duke, smiling. "But do, Elinor, go pay your visit."

Lady Emily entering, the conversation stopped; she was very impatient to see Caroline again. They found

Lady Gertrude's drawing-room full. Lady Emily and Caroline were really glad to meet. Miss Westburn was introduced to the strangers, and the Duchess seeing in her the future Countess of Ravensworth, was uncommonly gracious ; she also paid the most flattering compliments to Lady Gertrude and her daughter. Public places, and the parties for the present month, were talked over ; and the Duchess inquired what day they had chosen for their presentation at Court ? Lady Gertrude replied, she waited for the arrival of Lord Bellengen. Her Grace applauded her delicate feelings respecting her father, and then offered to attend her and the young ladies, whatever day they chose for their presentation. This polite offer was accepted with pleasure. Lady Emily, in her lively way, said, she, Miss Howard, and Miss Westburn, must have long consultations about their

dresses; and the next morning was appointed for their going about to mantua-makers, milliners, &c. to order what they wanted. “We should have no men with us,” said Lady Emily; “they will only distract us, laugh at our caprices, and we shall order every thing frightful and unbecoming.”

The Duchess soon withdrew, and left her lively niece to spend the day at Park Lane. The account she gave of the fashionable world amazed her auditors. “I think,” cried Caroline, “you are grown very severe; is it possible all you tell us can be true?”—“Too true,” answered Lady Emily: “can any one be too severe on those young women of fashion, who, forgetting their situation in life, their religion, what is due to their families and to themselves, as beings placed there to perform the will of their Creator, marry merely to have the power of following unrestrained the most

vicious pursuits, and involve all connected with them in misery and shame? Can one, I ask you, be too severe on such women, who must be considered as more infamous than the wretch found under a lamp at night? She may be in want of a morsel of bread, and loath the means she has unfortunately taken to procure it. The woman of rank and fashion can know no want, but what her depraved fancy makes; she is surrounded with blessings; it is her own fault if she turns them to curses.”—“All you say is just,” returned Caroline; “but I am astonished at finding you so much graver than you used to be.”—“I am changed, and as sentimental and quiet as you are, Caroline; in a little time I will let you into all my secrets; at present I can only tell you my aunt is very angry with me for not being in love with the Marquis. As man and wife, we should be ill suited; and we have each of us fortune enough

to please ourselves. I believe, my dear Caroline, my good aunt will not be able to keep us in leading-strings much longer. You well know," said she arch-ly, "the Marquis would reject me, were I over head and ears in love with him." Caroline, deeply blushing, answered, the Marquis was worthy of a good wife, and she hoped he would meet with one to make him happy. The coldness of this answer surprised Lady Emily, who supposed her rejection of Fitzroy proceeded from attachment to the Marquis.

Lord Ravensworth was almost an inmate at Park Lane : he spent some hours in the day with his lawyers, regulating his marriage-settlements ; his generosity was unbounded, and he now rejoiced, that his transient inconstancy had assisted in displaying those charming qualities in Miss Westburn's disposition, on which he could rest secure for happiness.

Guessing Lord William's secret, he spent some hours every day with him, and vainly endeavoured to draw from him a confession of the state of his heart; it was not an idle curiosity he wished to gratify; he had conceived a sincere friendship for the amiable Lord William, and hoped to be of essential service at this delicate juncture.

The ladies were for some days much employed in preparing for their appearance in the gay world, and spent their evenings in a private way with the Duchess, or at Park Lane. The Marquis was delicately attentive to Miss Howard; he hoped to conquer her coldness by submission; he did not mention love, but shewed it in every look and action. Every hour his admiration increased, and the dread of losing her changed his gay nature, and rendered him restless, gloomy, and unhappy.

One morning Lord Ravensworth re-

requested the young ladies to accompany him to Gray's, in Sackville Street, where he had left his mother's jewels, to be new-set for Catherine; he had also made a great addition to them, and wished for her approbation of his taste before the ornaments were entirely finished. Lady Gertrude was applied to for her judgment, and said, "Make Gray send them here in the evening, and we can then have a consultation both of ladies and gentlemen. I cannot leave home this morning."

Lord William and the Marquis met Lord Ravensworth and the fair friends as they were quitting the house, and proposed a walk in Kensington Gardens, when they had finished their business at Gray's: this was determined on, and they agreed to call for Lady Emily and Mr. Lindsey.

Our young party had scarcely left Park Lane, when a servant entered



Lady Gertrude's dressing-room, and desiring to speak with Mr. Howard in another room, put a note into his hand, which he said he was ordered to deliver in private. Mr. Howard stepped aside, and opening the note, read the following lines: "The man, dear Howard, who once refused to see you, is now anxious to embrace you, and trusts, that in our meeting, all the unfortunate and disagreeable past may be forgotten. I lay at Salt Hill last night, and have been at Long's Hotel, Dover Street, about an hour. My spirits are much hurried; I long to behold my darling child, whom that cruel unfeeling man (I cannot name him) has so long deprived me of: but as I dread hurrying or alarming her, I wish to see you first, to settle our meeting. My hand trembles, but it is with eagerness and pleasure. Dear Howard, look on me henceforth as your affectionate father. Don't delay coming to me.

My agitation will not subside till I see Gertrude.

“ Yours ever, BELLENGEN.”

Mr. Howard read the note with trembling impatience, snatched up his hat, and left the house, desiring the servant to say (should Lady Gertrude inquire for him) that he was gone to the stables. He was soon in Dover Street, and under great perturbation of mind entered the Hotel : inquiring for Lord Bellengen's apartments, he was instantly shewn to them. With an air of submission, and a flushed cheek, Mr. Howard advanced to the door, desiring the servant not to precede him. He opened the door himself, and shutting it quickly, advanced into the middle of the apartment.

Lord Bellengen was sitting on a sofa with his back to the entrance ; a breakfast-table was placed near him ; and not expecting Mr. Howard could obey his summons so quickly, when he heard the

door open, believing it to be the waiter, he continued leaning with his cheek resting on his hand, and his elbow on the table. Mr. Howard advanced, saying, in a voice almost inarticulate from agitation, "My dear Lord, what a happy moment is this! how shall I express my gratitude for your goodness?" The old Peer, hearing a voice which he instantly recollected, started from the table as quickly as his trembling frame would allow him, and eagerly grasping his son-in-law's hand, he embraced him with affection: "My dear Howard, you are welcome; excuse an old man just recovered from the gout. Sit down by me; I am scarcely able to bear such a scene as this." Mr. Howard supported him with tenderness to the sofa, and sat down near him. Lord Bellengen paused for some minutes, and looked earnestly at Mr. Howard, who still held his hand in his. "Howard," cried the Peer,

when his agitation subsided, “you look wonderfully well; you are young yet; how does my Gertrude? Is she still beautiful?”—“She is so in my eyes, my Lord,” replied Mr. Howard; “time, however, though it often suffers loveliness to remain, still in passing alters both face and form. Years will tell, and a look of early youth cannot be expected in middle life.”—“It is true,” answered Lord Bellengen with a sigh; “you must find me an old man.”—“I trust, my dear Lord, you will soon be a healthy and a happy one: content smooths wrinkles, and gives, if not youth itself, at least the energy and animation of it to the form. I have the comfort to assure you, my Lord, that Gertrude is much improved in her health and looks since your first letter to her; the alteration has been visible to every one; never had child fonder affections towards a parent than she feels for you.”—“And

I, unhappy man that I am," cried Lord Bellengen, " have blighted her health and beauty, and have caused her to live in obscurity, and all through the machinations of a villain." Here the good Peer was violently affected. Mr. Howard endeavoured to sooth him, saying, " As to Gertrude, I hope you will see the difference in her is only what twenty years must naturally produce in the most lovely. Her health is now, I trust, perfectly restored ; I think your presence and affection, my Lord, will render her completely happy. If we have lived in the shade, you must cease to regret it ; we have lived a life of love, of innocence, and virtue, and have had leisure to attend ourselves to the education of our children, and to form their minds and manners to our wishes. You know Henry from his letters, and in Caroline you will find a second Gertrude."

Lord Bellengen looked delighted ; he

could not speak, but leaning towards Mr. Howard, he pressed him in his arms. Mr. Howard returned the pressure, greatly affected. At length Lord Bel-  
lengen said, "I cannot, Howard, trust myself to speak of that dreadful man, who ruined the peace of a brother that had been so truly his friend. I can never enter on the subject. I desired O'Brian to explain all, and shew my injured child the horrid letters found in his trunk."—  
"He did so, my good Lord; and both Gertrude and I felt thankful to Heaven for clearing up our conduct, and proving the affection of our hearts towards you. I beseech your forgiveness for my offence to you. You know too well the dear object I was attached to, to impute my conduct to any thing but love; and will, I am convinced, be candid enough to acquit me of avarice. I call Heaven to witness, Gertrude was as dear to me without a shilling, as she could have

been, possessed of millions. Never did she grieve for the loss of fortune; but in the midst of a dear family, and happy in each other's love, yet still has she lamented her father's lost affection, and in my arms repented having disobeyed, and left you. Her grief was so amiable, so lovely in my eyes, that often, when it wounded me to the heart, I could not but admire her the more for feeling as she did. Now, my Lord, I have nothing in this world to wish for but a continuance of the blessings the Almighty has been pleased to shower on me. I pray that I may value them properly, and be able, in the midst of such prosperity, to keep my heart from pride."—"The very wish will secure you," said Lord Bellengen; and motioning to Mr. Howard to ring the bell, on the entrance of the servant he ordered his carriage to be got immediately. "Do, Howard," said the Peer, "stay and go with me to your

wife. The coach will be at the door in half an hour; I shall want your support."

Mr. Howard perceived that the breakfast was untouched, and he entreated Lord Bellengen to eat something before he left the Hotel, as his nerves seemed in so wretched a state, he feared fasting would hurt him essentially. Mr. Howard placed some chocolate before him in so tender a manner, that the good Peer could not refuse it; and then thinking it most prudent to turn the conversation from such interesting subjects, he endeavoured to amuse the Earl with an account of many things that had lately passed; he mentioned Miss Westburn's being a guest in his house, and her approaching marriage with Lord Ravensworth. He spoke of the Duke and his family, but avoided saying any thing of Caroline's rejection of Lord Beaumont, not knowing how it might appear to her grandfather; and he left it to Lady



Gertrude to inform her father of all family matters.

As soon as the carriage was ready, Lord Bellengen rose from his seat ; and just desiring his servants to have his baggage carried to Park Lane, he leaned on Mr. Howard's arm, and got to his coach as fast as his recent fit of gout would allow him to do. The young people were not at home, and Lady Gertrude had ordered her porter to deny her to all visitors, wishing to have the morning to herself. As soon as the carriage stopped in Park Lane, Mr. Howard jumped out, and assisted Lord Bellengen, who he found was scarcely able to stand from violent agitation. He ordered a servant to open his study door, which was on the ground floor ; and Lord Bellengen, almost carried in, was placed upon a sofa, and Mr. Howard sent a servant to the housekeeper for drops and water.

Lady Gertrude having heard a loud knock at the door, and a great bustle in the house, supposed company had been let in by mistake ; for she had no idea that her father was yet in England. She went to the window to see who had called, when she beheld a travelling coach, with her father's arms and livery. A glance was enough ; she flew like lightning down stairs, and meeting a servant in her way, cried, " Where is he ? Where is my father ? "—" In my master's study, my Lady," said John, her old footman ; " for God's sake be composed, or you will kill him." She darted forward, and in a moment threw herself at her father's feet, crying, " O my father, my dear father ! do I again see you ? are you come to bless your child ? " Mr. Howard instantly raised her ; she was folded in Lord Bellengen's arms, he calling her by every tender and affectionate name he had given her in early youth. She

clasped her arms round his neck, pressed her cheek to his, and dropped fainting on his shoulder.

The good Earl was almost frantic; but Mr. Howard endeavoured to calm him, and entreated he would suffer her to be laid on the sofa, and she would soon recover, as joy only had completely overpowered her. Her woman coming with restoratives, she was in a little time brought to herself, and drops were administered to her and her agitated parent.

At last composure returned to this interesting trio, and Lady Gertrude was placed close to her beloved father on the sofa, while Mr. Howard stood with humid eyes, gazing on the tender embraces and fond looks he gave his recovered child. Two or three hours were spent in conversation most interesting to the hearts of father and daughter: were they to be repeated here, the reader would undoubtedly vote them a bore;

we shall only mention a few circumstances. Lord Bellengen spoke much of his grandson, and shewed his parents all the letters he had received from him. "He must be a fine youth," cried he, "if this picture is like him" (drawing a miniature of Henry Howard from his pocket); "tell me, Gertrude, should you know this to be your son's picture?" Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude examined it with delight, and assured Lord Bellengen it was an excellent likeness, but they said he must be much grown, and improved in his person, since he left England. "He must be a very handsome fellow," said the good Peer; "I don't wonder you should be proud of him; he will have a noble fortune. You, Gertrude," continued Lord Bellengen, "must now receive every year from me sufficient for you and Howard to live as splendidly as you can wish to do. When you see your old castle, my

child, you will scarcely know it again, I have beautified it so for your reception : the alterations are not complete, but O'Brian will take care to have every thing perfectly executed. I have made him too happy for him to neglect my wishes. I saw him united to my charming little nurse before I left Castle Bel-  
lengen. You will love her, Gertrude ; she has an excellent heart, and has taken the tenderest care of your father."—  
 " Why was I not with you, to watch your sick bed myself ?" cried Lady Gertrude, bursting into tears. " Weep not, my beloved child," returned her fond parent ; " I come here to drive all sorrow from your heart, to obliterate the past, and not to give you distress." Then throwing his arms round her, he folded her to his paternal bosom. Lady Gertrude smiled in the midst of her tears, and the beautiful colours that her lips and cheeks still wore when she was

in health, began to return to them ; and her father, earnestly looking at her, said, " My dearest child, what delight it gives me, to see you still what Gertrude Bellengen was ! I could have had no idea that the alteration in your appearance is so slight as I find it to be." Lady Gertrude, though she had little vanity, felt gratified that she brought back to her father's remembrance her early youth, and it added smiles and cheerfulness to her countenance. She now requested to shew Lord Bellengen the apartments she had set aside for his use, which he found were the best and most convenient in the house.

We shall here leave him and his daughter to enjoy their long-wished-for meeting for an hour or two tête-à-tête in his dressing-room, and follow the young party from Gray's to Kensington Gardens. They had called for Lady Emily and Mr. Lindsey, and just as they

entered the park, saw Captain Biron and Fitzroy at a little distance, who immediately joined them. Lady Emily blushed deeply, and could not conceal a look of pleasure at this rencontre so little expected. Captain Biron rejoiced to see Caroline again. Fitzroy approaching her in a degree of confusion, paid his compliments, and having been presented to Miss Westburn, took his station by Lady Emily : they crossed the park, and soon got into detached parties. The Marquis again addressed Miss Howard, whom he contrived to separate from her friend ; he besought her to listen to him with patience, and pity the sufferings of his heart. Caroline, heartily vexed that he had found an opportunity of talking to her on a subject she hoped she had put to silence for ever, expressed a degree of displeasure that grieved Lord Beaumont to the soul : he entreated her pardon, and yet every moment offended ;

he found it quite impossible to give her up, or to put a curb on either his wishes or expressions. Finding that her repeated assurances that she could never listen to his suit had little effect, she told him, that in future she should avoid every party where he made one; that he shewed little kindness in giving her so much pain; and the consequence of his conduct would be, she should either confine herself to her own apartment, or entreat her father and mother to carry her back to Rosefield. "I have offered you my friendship," said she warmly, "and you reject it; I have told you I cannot give you my love, and I now suppose you wish me to hate you."—"Hate me!" cried Lord Beaumont with a look of horror: "hate me, Miss Howard! am I doomed to the misery of being hated by you?"—"You draw it upon yourself, my Lord, by your own violence:



it is best to put an end to such a conversation."

She moved from him in saying this, and advancing to Lord Ravensworth, laid hold of his arm, and entered Kensington Gardens with him and Miss Westburn. The Marquis had not power to follow them; and though he was enraged at his disappointment, he was conscious he was himself the cause of Miss Howard's severity and displeasure by persecuting her as he did. He remained thunderstruck at the outside of the garden door, waiting till Lord William, who was walking with Mr. Lindsey, came up to him. He then desired to speak with his brother before he entered the gardens; and Mr. Lindsey going in, and leaving them tête-à-tête, they walked about near the door. The Marquis repeated every word that had passed, condemned himself for tormenting Miss Howard, and endeavouring to force the

tenderness that he hoped time and assiduity might create for him. Lord William could not speak nor look at his brother ; he sighed deeply. “ I shall return home,” said the Marquis ; “ I cannot support her displeasure ; I leave it to you, William, to make peace for me. Whatever conditions she imposes on me, I will submit to, provided she does not deprive me of seeing her, or banish me her house. Go, my kind William, deprecate her anger ; your brother cannot bear it ; speak for me, tell her my devotion to her every wish, even to the making myself wretched. I cannot exist under the tortures my mind endures. Wherever she is seen, she must be adored. I shall soon have a thousand rivals ; and if I am banished from her presence, I shall suppose a favoured one. I shall give credit to every vague report concerning her ; I shall be tortured to death, without the power of

judging for myself. Bring her to forgive me, William, for this morning's folly; tell her I accept her friendship as a blessing from heaven; soften her towards me; in pity to your brother, make use of every argument, that, were you in love yourself, could be suggested to move her pity." All this time the brothers were walking arm in arm before the ha-ha. Lord William could scarcely breathe; his face was pale as death. What an errand to be sent on! what a trial of his heart and of his fraternal love! He could no longer endure what he felt, and, disengaging himself from his brother, said, "Frederick, I will do all you wish." He left him, and hastily entered the garden door. The Marquis passed over the park, and returned to Grosvenor Square.

As soon as Lord William reached one of the benches, he sat down in extreme agitation; his party was out of sight:

he felt comforted in having a few minutes to himself to determine on the conduct he should pursue, and to strengthen his good resolutions. He saw Mr. Lindsey at some distance, and alone; he waited till he came nearer, and then beckoning him to approach, he pointed to the seat near him; and when Mr. Lindsey had placed himself by his beloved pupil, he related all that had passed between him and the Marquis. "And what, my dear boy, is your intention?" asked the good man. "To make up, if possible, this quarrel," replied Lord William; "to act honourably by my unhappy brother, to avoid the too dangerous Caroline, and to quit London when I can find an excuse that will pass current with my father." Mr. Lindsey took some time to consider, and then told Lord William he was perfectly right in avoiding Miss Howard. "We cannot again," said he, "go to-

gether to the country without creating suspicion in your father, who is not free from an idea, that you are unhappy, and has often inquired from me, if you had any attachment in Italy : at these times I have avoided the conversation as much as possible. Time, my child, may befriend you ; don't despair of happiness. That Being, whose eye is over all, protects virtue. Never shrink from it, William ; let the sufferings of your mind be what they may, still will virtue and good conduct speak peace and comfort to your soul. I feel, my child, both for you and your amiable brother. I wish this unfortunate business to terminate so as not to destroy your fraternal affection ; were that to be the case, I know you and Lord Beaumont too well, to believe that even the possession of Caroline could bring happiness to either. Every thing depends on your prudent conduct. I see the party

coming; we will join them, contrive to draw Miss Howard apart, and to bring her again on terms of friendship with your brother."

Lord William had only time to press Mr. Lindsey's hand; they rose on the approach of Lord Ravensworth, with Catherine and Caroline leaning on him. Lady Emily, Fitzroy, and Captain Biron were behind. As soon as Lord William had an opportunity, he entreated Miss Howard to grant him a few minutes conversation; and insensibly drawing her from the group, as they all turned down one of the retired walks, in faltering accents he repeated to her all that the Marquis had said, and his entreaty to him that he should follow her, and appease her anger. "O Caroline!" cried he, "what a task to plead with you, in favour of another! Though a brother, yet he is a rival; and I am under the sad neces-

sity of using him shamefully, or of endeavouring to restore him to your favour. Pardon my miserable brother the ardour of his disposition ; he bids me tell you, he will accept your terms of friendship ; at present, he only wishes you not to banish him your sight ; all he desires is, still to see you, and adore you in silence. O Caroline ! restore him to your friendship ; I beseech you not to drive him to absolute despair."

Caroline answered not ; her eyes had been fixed on the ground, as she walked by the side of Lord William. His were riveted on her lovely face, with a look of the most perfect tenderness, at the moment he was pleading for another ; but that other was a brother whom he loved as his life, and who had placed his whole confidence in him.

The good, the generous Lord William, lost not by this effort of virtue :

all that he said in favour of his brother, (and it was much), fixed the heart of his Caroline more firmly his, than had he made use of all the eloquence of love to express his own passion. He entreated Miss Howard to consider coolly of his brother's merits, of the excellent husband he would make to a being he so adored. "Much," said he, "will be expected from you by your family; how will Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude be satisfied to see you relinquish high rank with such a man, and every other advantage you can have in life? Will they be satisfied to see you remain unmarried, refusing all the offers you will undoubtedly have? You will not long be able to resist their wishes, their prayers; and whom will you meet so amiable, so wholly attached to you as Beaumont? I know his excellence; and if any thing on this earth could give me consolation for your loss,



it would be the certainty that my brother was the possessor of such a treasure.”

Lord William had gone to the utmost stretch of fraternal affection. He was silent. They walked on. Miss Howard's bosom heaved ; she appeared much agitated ; her colour went and came. He was still gazing at her in almost an agony, when she raised her soft eyes to his, and said, “ Lord William, I approve your conduct, though it tortures me. You know my heart ; alas ! it has no disguise. I have given my final answer to your brother ; let me be reserved for what I will, I never can be his. If we are to live on terms, he must have done with love ; I will not listen to it. Tell him from me, I am satisfied to be his friend, to treat him with my usual kindness, provided he will not suppose I mean to encourage a passion, that I now declare the first time he mentions to me, will make us for ever strangers.

But I will not impose the task on you to tell him this ; if he will spend this evening at our house, I will tell him all I now say to you, and it will be his own fault, if in future we are not always friends."

Lord William could make no answer ; a thousand contending passions worked in his bosom. Miss Howard cast her eyes to the ground. She could not endure the look of agony she saw in his face. They walked on in silence. At length Lord William said in a disturbed voice, " Caroline, my angel Caroline !"—" Hush !" cried Miss Howard, again raising her eyes to his face, " drop such language, and let us not render ourselves worthless by breaking through the virtuous resolutions formed at the ruins." Then giving him a look of mingled love, sweetness, and fortitude, she said, " Farewell for the present, Lord William ; carry back my friend-

ship to your brother, and let us see you both to-night in Park Lane." Lord William felt miserable, and yet inwardly gratified; he bowed, and leaving Caroline close to Miss Westburn, quitted the gardens.

This chapter, already longer than we intended, or, perhaps, than our readers may wish, has rather fatigued us: we will, with leave, repose on one of the seats in Kensington Gardens, where we can enjoy the shade and cool breeze this warm morning in the lovely month of May, and wait till our party have finished their walk.

## CHAP. XXX.

LADY Gertrude had given orders, that when her daughter returned, she alone should be shewn to the room Lord Bellengen occupied. Lord Ravensworth was the only person invited to dinner; Lady Gertrude had asked the Duchess and their usual party to sup with her after the opera. She told her father of this, and offered to put them off if it would annoy him; but the good Peer's cheerful disposition made him fond of company, and his happiness was now so great, he wished to have witnesses of it. He became impatient to see his grand-daughter, and about an hour before dinner, she and

Miss Westburn returned, attended by Lord Ravensworth.

When Caroline was informed of her grandfather's arrival, she flew to his apartment to pay her duty to him; her mother and Mr. Howard were with him, and anxious to present their lovely child. On her entrance, Lord Bellen-gen was so struck with her figure and face, that astonishment prevented him stirring from his seat, or speaking. The dignity of her form, the brilliancy of her complexion, and the wonderful beauty of her large, soft, black eyes, with the dark, long eyelashes that shaded them; her fine hair now a little dishevelled by the wind, with the fascinating sweetness of her countenance, animated with pleasure at seeing the parent she long wished to behold (and was always taught to revere), gave her the appearance of something more than human; and the charming sensibility

of her heart shewed itself, when springing towards Lord Bellengen, she, as he sat, threw her arms round his neck, kissed him with the greatest affection, her eyes swimming in tears, and instantly told him, it was the happiest moment she had ever experienced, for her dear mother would now be restored to peace. Lord Bellengen rose from his seat; and straining her to his heart, said, "Is this possible?" Then pushing her gently from him, he held her at a little distance, and gazing at her with the utmost delight, cried, "I think I behold Gertrude as she used to look after some of her long walks at Bellengen Castle."

Lady Gertrude and her amiable husband were melted into tenderness at this scene, and the now happy father seemed to be the most cheerful of the party. Miss Howard's likeness to her mother

both pleased and gratified him, and she immediately became a violent favourite.

Lord Bellengen was left to prepare for dinner; and on entering the saloon, Miss Westburn and Lord Ravensworth were introduced to him.

The still fine person of the Earl, which shewed he must have been in youth one of the handsomest men of the age; the fire of his eyes, with the expression of extreme good-nature in his countenance; the politeness of his manners, and the good understanding he seemed to possess, gained him also instant approbation. His only failing, a violent temper, was now much subdued, and having no cause to excite it, when he was in possession of all he could wish in this world, his company and conversation were truly charming. He had the gaiety and spirit of his nation; and having lived much in the great world, and travelled when

young, he was full of anecdote. His stories were not those of an old man; they were pointed, witty, and concise; and his taste in every thing was good. Such was Lady Gertrude's father; and it cannot be wondered at, that she, naturally an affectionate child, and so beloved by him, should have severely felt the pain and grief her leaving him had inflicted upon him and herself, for many years. Filial duty and affection once swerved from by a good mind (and such have often swerved in the rash hour of youth and passion), will give pangs to the heart, which none but those that feel them can conceive. A consciousness of having failed to a parent in duty and affection, will poison the cup of felicity, and cast a dark cloud over every joy. The delight felt in beholding their own offspring, will be embittered by the fear of *their* also failing in those duties themselves have



neglected, and that they must feel (should it be so), they have no right to condemn. Poor Lady Gertrude's heart was this day relieved of a weight she could not much longer have supported; and she endeavoured, by the fondest attention, to obliterate her father's remembrance of the past. His admiration of Caroline was to her the most delicate flattery.

Lady Gertrude was engaged to go to the opera with the Duchess of Cathmore; but preferring a tête-à-tête with her father, she requested her husband to escort Caroline and Miss Westburn, and to bring the whole party home to supper. Lord Bellengen declared Caroline looked like an angel, and kissing her when she went out, told her she would nearly equal her mother in his affections. We shall not here attempt to pry into the private conversation between Lord Bellengen and his now

happy child ; but this we know, that their hearts were unburdened and mutually gratified, and that Lord Bellen-gen declared he loved and admired Howard for his conduct to his Gertrude.

We shall leave Park Lane, and follow our young friends to the opera. It was well known, that Lord Ravensworth was soon to be united to Miss Westburn ; she was admired by the men, and envied by the women. The buzz went round, that the Marquis of Beaumont was also to be married to the extraordinary beauty, Miss Howard, who was lately returned from abroad. Every eye was fixed on their box ; but the young friends, not having the vanity to suppose they were objects of attention, were perfectly at ease. Fitzroy was occupied by Lady Emily, who seemed only anxious to please *him*.

The Marquis soon appeared with Lord William, and placing themselves

directly behind Miss Howard, the quarrel of the morning was entirely made up. He accepted Caroline's own conditions, and she treated him with the utmost good-humour and easy freedom, which only made him more miserable; he could neither quit her, nor turn his eyes from her; and while she conversed with him on the most indifferent subjects, the spectators believed they were so deeply interested in each other, that every thing else was disregarded by them. Lord William, who also sat behind her, spoke little, and she grieved to hear the heavy sighs that often escaped him. She dared scarcely speak to him; and never did she venture to look towards him, and she felt happy when the last dance gave the signal for departing. Lord William could not resist the pleasure of offering to conduct her to the carriage; and the Marquis, who feared to offend by too

much attention, gave his brother a look of thanks for not suffering another to escort her. Lord William felt this kind look like ice on his heart. The idea, that at that moment he was deceiving his brother, and carrying a false appearance, so shocked and hurt him, that he nearly dropped Caroline's hand, which he felt tremble in his. Silent, and with a melancholy look, he led her to her coach, and then, accompanied by his brother, and the rest of the party, followed her to Park Lane.

When the ceremony of presenting Lord Bellengen to the strangers had taken place, a few minutes sufficed to set every one at ease. The Duchess, who now anxiously wished the Marquis to succeed with Miss Howard, courted Lord Bellengen, with whom she was really pleased, and placing herself next him at supper, made use of the most

flattering expressions in praise of Lady Gertrude and the lovely Caroline.

The supper was gay, and the conversation turning on the opera, catches and glees were proposed. When the company had been gratified with several, the Marquis requested Miss Howard to sing alone. She consented; her harp was brought, and she sung some airs that charmed every one, and perfectly enchanted her grandfather. The Marquis dared not give utterance to his feelings, though he sat close to her; but every one perceived how deeply he was enamoured, and Lord Bellengen imagined he saw a future Duchess in his charming granddaughter. He was highly pleased with the conquest she had made; he knew nothing of her rejection of the Marquis; her mother had feared to touch on the subject.

Thus passed the day; and accumulated misery was heaped on Lord Wil-

William and his brother ; one obliged to curb his feelings, at least the expression of them, in the company of her he loved, and the other forced by honour, and the tie of consanguinity, to stifle every tender emotion of the heart, and to bear the torture of increasing love and despair.

“ Hope, which supports the structure of the heart,  
From his was moulder'd, and despair was lodg'd  
Within the ruins.”

Lord William, finding it impossible to support the life he now led, again entreated his father to allow of his going into the army. He pressed it so earnestly, that the Duke was confirmed in his opinion ; and on mentioning his mother's wish of seeing him united to Lady Almeria, Lord William declared his aversion to her, and added, he had no thoughts of ever marrying. The Duke needed no more to persuade him

he had made a true judgment of his son, and deeply feeling the grief he saw expressed in his face, he promised he would consider his request. "I see you are unhappy, my dear William. I do not desire you to trust me with your secrets. Perhaps some occupation may be of service to you, and relieve this languor of your mind. I will think seriously of the army for you." And laying his hand on Lord William's shoulder, he continued: "My son, I am satisfied, will ever act so as to meet my approbation, and my love. To see you and your brother happy, William, I could resign life."—"Never will I disgrace my father," replied this amiable young man, tears starting to his eyes. He instantly quitted the room.

The Duke fell into deep thought, on what would be the best means of extricating his excellent sons from their present distress, well knowing that the

most dangerous consequences might ensue from letting matters remain as they now were.

London was at this season a scene of gaiety. The day for the presentation of Lady Gertrude and the young friends was fixed on, and the intervening time was spent at parties, balls, the opera, &c. &c. Miss Howard was the most admired beauty in town, and captivated many, who supposing she was to be united to Lord Beaumont, were prevented soliciting her hand. The Marquis with dismay saw her surrounded by most of the young men of fashion, all striving for a smile, and on the watch to pay her the least attention. The Earl of Derwentwater, a fine young man, with a large fortune, and in the army, saw her at a private party, and was so deeply smitten, that, disregarding all that was said of Lord Beaumont, he determined on pushing his own fortune



to the utmost. His father had formerly been a friend of Lord Bellengen's; he got introduced to the old Peer, and soon became a violent favourite. As soon as Lord Bellengen knew that the Marquis's addresses were not agreeable to Caroline, he became a strong advocate for Lord Derwentwater, whose rank and fortune were unexceptionable. He was very handsome, amiable, and accomplished; and in his eight-and-twentieth year. He had from the old Earl a constant invitation to Park Lane; and Lady Gertrude and Mr. Howard would gladly have seen him a successful lover. Caroline could not be insensible that she was the magnet that drew him to the house, for he was constantly near her there, and at all public places, giving every proof of attachment. She treated him with civility, and totally disregarded his attentions; but he took no notice of this coldness, and baffled

it with politeness : this vexed her to the heart. Thinking there was no favoured rival, Lord Derwentwater imagined that the coldness of Miss Howard's nature, and her being so happy at home, prevented her choosing a husband from the many who so greatly admired her : he determined on a quiet pursuit ; he ventured nothing in words, he left his actions to speak for him, and hoped in time to render himself agreeable. This put it completely out of her power to get rid of him, and rendered her life uncomfortable.

Lord Derwentwater's conduct tortured the Marquis ; he dreaded so powerful a rival, and felt the pangs of jealousy added to his former distress. Lord William was no less miserable, but from a different cause ; he did not doubt the truth of his Caroline, but he doubted her having power to resist the united efforts of her family in favour of

a match so desirable. His agony surpassed that of his brother ; he saw in the young Earl, a happy and successful lover, and his soul sickened at the idea.

Time, which stops not its course for the happy or the miserable, passed on. Fitzroy every day found his good opinion of Lady Emily increase ; and though he did not feel for her the ardent passion Miss Howard had inspired him with, yet her liveliness and agreeable temper promised him a happy life in a union with her ; tenderness towards her was fast gaining upon him, but till he felt a decided preference, this worthy young man was determined not to make her an offer of his hand. So we must leave Dan Cupid to his own wicked ways, and we have no doubt he will do what only he could accomplish—conquer a brave British tar twice over.

Lord Ravensworth made daily visits to his lawyers, and hurried them to

little purpose. They declared marriage articles were necessary and serious things; ought to be minutely investigated, and properly settled, to prevent disputes in families; and as these good gentlemen were only in love with the profits of their labour, they *wondered* how his Lordship could be so distressed at a month's delay. His Lordship, however, was obliged to submit; and though Miss Westburn had not the smallest objection to become Lady Ravensworth, she found herself very happy in London, where she enjoyed a scene so new to her, and that in company with her friend and lover.

The evening before the drawing-room, Lady Gertrude and Caroline were summoned to the good Lord Belengen's dressing-room: in the middle of the apartment were two large baskets, each containing a superb and complete court dress; nothing was wanting, the

smallest article was thought of: Lady Gertrude's was white, with the richest gold embroidery; Caroline's, white and silver; wherever lace was necessary, the most expensive and elegant was made use of. On the table lay two large jewel-boxes, which the Earl himself unlocked, and calling Lady Gertrude towards him, who stood in wonder at her father, said, "My dear Gertrude, here are all your family jewels; and those I had given, in addition, to your angel mother: I have had them, my child, new set for you, and beg you will relieve an old man from the trouble of keeping them." He then embraced her, and, closing the box, delivered it to her.

Lady Gertrude, quite overcome, could scarcely articulate her thanks and gratitude: the old Earl was affected; a pang crossed his heart when he reflected how many years he had left her; but unwilling to give way to disagreeable sen-

sations in a season of happiness, he turned cheerfully to Caroline, saying, " You are so ugly, I must try to set off that face of yours, by shining ornaments, that you may pass at court to-morrow." He then displayed a number of beautiful ornaments, in diamonds and pearls, that he had ordered for her at Gray's. It was impossible for any thing to be in more exquisite taste : those for the head were superb. " I have not given you a diamond necklace," said the Earl, " for I should despair of equalling that belonging to your good Mother Abbess ; but you must let me know, Caroline, if you wish for any thing more at present than this box contains, and only on these terms will I give it into your possession."

Highly was Caroline gratified by her grandfather's generosity, but infinitely more by his affection ; and having embraced and thanked him with the utmost

simplicity and sweetness, she did not wait till the next day to display her finery, but had them instantly carried to the drawing-room, to shew them to those friends that were then in Park Lane. The old Earl was charmed; she could have done nothing that would have pleased him so much. Old people are in general ambitious of being applauded by the young for their taste. We must, however, own, there was neither vanity nor conceit in Lord Bellengen; his taste in every thing was acknowledged by all who were acquainted with him, and had any themselves.

The morning come, the whole party went to St. James's, where they were met by the Duchess and her family; the group was a handsome and brilliant one. Lady Emily and Miss Westburn were most elegantly dressed. Lord Ravensworth could not prevail on Miss Westburn to wear the jewels he had present-

ed to her till she became his wife ; but the elegant simplicity of her dress this day did not render them necessary. The Duchess was magnificent ; but there was nothing, that morning at least, could compare with Caroline ; she was perfect beauty. Lady Gertrude and she were most graciously received, and the whole Court allowed that no one more lovely than Miss Howard had ever appeared there. The Marquis and Lord William were close to her ; but nothing could prevent the attentions of the persevering Lord Derwentwater : hope animated his heart, and sparkled in his eyes ; and sometimes, taking his station near Lord Bellengen, they both listened with delight to the applause that ran through the room. Caroline herself, abashed at what she could not but hear, was rendered even more beautiful by the modest blush those praises raised in her lovely cheeks.



The drawing-room was so crowded, that getting away till a late hour was out of the question ; and notwithstanding Lord Bellengen's recent gout, when he saw his grand-daughter so admired, he felt pleased at having an excuse to remain almost to the last.

The evening was passed at the Duchess's, where there was an immense party ; at which the company displayed their Court finery ; and the lovers, whose steps we have followed to the present moment, found opportunities of offering up their vows at the shrine of Beauty.

## CHAP. XXXI.

" 'Tis some mischance ; the cry is very direful.

- - - - -

Kill men i' th' dark ! Where be these bloody  
thieves ?

How silent is this place !—ho ! murder ! murder !"

It would occupy the time of my fair readers to no purpose, to describe the amusements of London, which are carried on, year after year, in the same way, and of which they are constant partakers. Balls, masquerades, operas, and plays, follow each other in quick succession : first, they delight, then weary, and at last satiate the votaries of pleasure. As our heroine had not the good fortune to attract lovers who would venture their necks to run away with her, or were inclined to challenge

every man that looked at her, we can have little out of the common line of life to report.

The birthday came, and our party made their second appearance at Court in as brilliant a style as possible ; and the Duchess, seeing Miss Howard the admiration of the whole town, was now all anxiety for her union with her son. As high rank was in her opinion the first of all earthly blessings, she flattered herself *that* of a Duchess would outweigh all Miss Howard's objections, let them be what they would. The Duke had a different opinion, but kept it to himself. Lord Bellengen favoured Lord Derwentwater, and, to Caroline's great dismay, intimated so to her, and this intimation made her still more reserved to the young Earl.

The fifth of June the Duke and his family were engaged to spend the day at a friend's house beyond Hounslow.

The Duke and Duchess, with Lady Emily and Fitzroy, who was of the party, went in the Duke's landau, and Lord William with the Marquis in his chaise.

The brothers, as they left town, called in Park Lane to pay their compliments, and as it was opera-night, expressed their concern that they should not have the pleasure of attending the ladies to the Haymarket. "Perhaps," said Lord William, "we may get to town before the opera is over, and we can drive there without stopping." Lord William and Miss Howard avoided all private conversation; they could not trust themselves, and prudently shunned the danger that might result from the smallest imprudence. Lord William's determination was to quit London when in his power, and leave it to fate, to work his future happiness or misery. Many a painful and agonized moment had he endured to bring himself to this determination. He

however anxiously wished to have one private conversation with Caroline before he bad her a long adieu, not to exact any thing on her part, but merely to assure her of his eternal attachment, and once more to state the reasons for his conduct. "She must approve them," said he to himself; "I should be unworthy a place in her pure heart, if I acted otherwise." He was right in his opinion. Miss Howard prized Lord William's honour equal with his love; and real principle gave a firmness of action to the tenderest disposition in the world, for Caroline's was such. Sincere, open, and affectionate in her nature, she had no disguise, but where it was prudent to have it; and her affections once obtained, no power on earth could shake them.

This morning Miss Howard was unusually low and *distract*: uneasy dreams had disturbed her during the night; and

and though she was not given to superstitious folly, she could not recover her spirits, when she thought of the disagreeable visions she had had. The Marquis and his brother, Teresa and the Mother Abbess of Santa Maria, all appeared to her in unpleasant situations, and she gladly left her bed to avoid a repetition of such distressing dreams. The brothers, when they paid their morning visit, were both struck with the depression of her spirits; they could make but a short stay at Mr. Howard's, and left it, regretting that they were not all to be of the same party, and heartily wishing the day over.

Lord Ravensworth and Lord Derwentwater dined in Park Lane, and in the evening accompanied the ladies to the opera. Lord Bellengen, who was extremely fond of music, never missed an opera-night. About the middle of the last act Lord Ravensworth thought

he saw a good deal of agitation in some of the boxes, and that the music was not much attended to. He left Lady Gertrude's box, to make inquiry for any foreign news that might have arrived, and he supposed had reached the house. Going into the lobby, he saw a group of gentlemen expressing much concern in their countenance; and he overheard them say, "We fear they are both dreadfully wounded, if not killed." Lord Ravensworth advanced, and though unacquainted with the gentlemen, requested to know what misfortune had happened. "Good God! my Lord," said one of them, "have you not heard? I hope you are not related to Lord Beaumont or Lord William Hume."—"I am not, Sir," replied Lord Ravensworth hastily. "I beseech you, tell me what has befallen them." The most dreadful ideas took possession of the Earl; he had penetrated Lord William's secret;

and the first idea that presented itself was, that the brothers had fought for Miss Howard ; for he was ignorant of Lord William's amiable resolutions with respect to the Marquis. Lord Ravensworth supported himself against the wall, for he was quite overcome. He entreated the gentlemen to tell him the whole of this dreadful business. "Dreadful indeed !" answered one of them : " we are sorry you have cause to be so much affected ; but all who know those two young Lords must feel for their dangerous situation : all we know is, that, coming over Hounslow Heath to-night, they were attacked by footpads, and, making resistance, they were both shot at, and it is feared they are dreadfully wounded ; the particulars are not yet perfectly known ; the report is vague ; a servant rode into town for a surgeon to meet them on the road, and this is all we have yet learned ; but as we are ex-



tremely interested for both the young noblemen, we have left the opera to inquire for them at the Duke of Cathmore's. We fear, if he loses his sons, he will sink under it."

This account, bad as it was, restored Lord Ravensworth; it was better than what he had at first supposed, and his thoughts were now turned to getting Lady Gertrude and her party home before they were apprised of this disagreeable adventure. He feared Caroline's feelings might prove a public declaration of her attachment, and the consequences might be terrible. This prudent friend then calling to Mr. Howard's servants, who were in waiting, ordered them instantly to take the carriage to one of the stage doors, to wait there for their coming, and not say a syllable of what they had heard to any of the party.

Lord Ravensworth was just returning to Lady Gertrude's box, when he met Cap-

tain Biron, who, in the greatest perturbation and horror, was leaving the house. O Ravensworth !” cried the worthy Captain, “ I am shocked to death ; I fear that fine fellow, Lord William Hume, is killed, and by a highwayman too ! What a fate ! Had he fallen in an engagement on board the Tempest, it would have been a matter to be proud of, and a glorious death ; but this is such a scurvy business !” They were now near the box-door, and Lord Ravensworth entreated the gallant tar not to mention what he had heard to the Howards. “ They are ignorant,” said he, “ of the whole affair ; let them continue so till we get them home ; I beseech you, Biron, not to come with me ; your looks will alarm them.”—“ I will run to the Duke’s,” cried Captain Biron, “ to know the truth, and I will meet you at Howard’s. What must they all feel for that fine young man ! Next to Fitzroy, I

love him better than any one. Well, I am glad I have no son."

The honest tar, who would not have been daunted had the cannon-balls of the whole French navy thundered in his ears, now turned from the box-door with his manly cheek pale, and the tears swimming in his eyes ; and leaving the Haymarket, walked hastily towards Grosvenor Square, to gain more perfect information of what had passed. Lord Ravensworth opened the door of Lady Gertrude's box ; she appeared struck with his look, and, aware of it, he said, " I have taken the liberty of ordering your Ladyship's carriage to one of the private doors ; you must come to it instantly across the stage, as I know for certain in a few minutes there will be a riot in the house ; and as it will be no scene for ladies, I am come to conduct you home." The ladies immediately rose. He whispered Lord Derwentwater

to hurry them out, and not ask a question as they passed. Then giving his hand to Lady Gertrude, he led her out, and they all followed, and having crossed the stage, they were soon in the carriage.

When arrived at Park Lane, Lord Ravensworth took Mr. Howard aside, and disclosed his unpleasant news. Mr. Howard was dreadfully shocked, and they agreed it would be most proper to prevent the ladies knowing any thing of the business that night ; and that every servant should have orders, if they had heard the horrid transaction, not to mention it. “ It will greatly affect Lady Gertrude and Miss Howard,” said Lord Ravensworth, “ whenever they hear it ; I would advise you, Howard, to get them to their rooms as soon as you can ; if you keep sentinel here, I will go to the Duke’s, and bring you all the information I can get.”

Mr. Howard would have accompanied Lord Ravensworth, but feared to leave the house, lest his wife and daughter might hear of this sad accident in some shocking way. He returned to the supper-room, where the little party were assembled, making an apology for Lord Ravensworth's not joining them that night. With an air of ease and composure, he whispered Lady Gertrude to retire as soon as she conveniently could after supper, and in the morning he would tell her why he wished her to do so. Lady Gertrude smiled her acquiescence; and when the supper things were removed, declaring she was fatigued, retired with Miss Westburn and Caroline.

Lord Bellengen and Lord Derwentwater were soon informed by Mr. Howard of the dreadful accident that had occurred, and they all waited in the ut-

most anxiety the return of Lord Ravensworth.

We must now give our readers a true account of the disaster that has befallen the amiable brothers, and not leave them to receive a mutilated one from any of the Duke's household that Lord Ravensworth may chance to see. The day had been agreeably spent at Belmont, the seat of the nobleman with whom the Duke and his family dined; the evening was extremely fine, and they were induced to stay later than it was prudent to do.

The Duke's carriage had four horses, and was well attended; by accident the Marquis's chaise had but a pair, and his groom rode with it, who finding, before they entered on Hounslow Heath, that his horse had picked up a stone, and would be lame by it, alit to relieve the poor animal, which stopped him for a long time, and detained him far behind.

The carriage proceeded, and when it was about the most lonely part of the Heath, Lord Beaumont heard a loud whistle, and by the light of the moon, which was now at the full, saw two fellows leap over a rough piece of ground, and make towards the chaise. He heard one of them call to the postilion to stop: the Marquis, alarmed, said to his brother, "For heaven's sake, don't let us stay to be murdered in the carriage;" and at the same moment, seizing one of the pistols that was in the front, and dashing the door open, jumped out. One of the fellows stopped at the horses' heads, and the other swiftly advancing to the Marquis with a great oak stick, knocked him down before he had time to fire, and stepping back a few paces, drew a pistol from his bosom, with an intent to murder him. At that moment Lord William, who had leaped out of the carriage after his brother, but was not

in time to prevent the blow from the ruffian, seeing his brother fall, and the villain preparing to shoot him, never bestowed a thought on his own safety, but trembling for the life of Lord Beaumont, with the quickness of lightning darted between, and endeavoured to knock the pistol out of the wretch's hand, who trembled so, he could not keep it steady; and a struggle ensuing, it went off at random, and shot Lord William in the upper part of the arm. He staggered, and the villains seeing the groom in full gallop towards them, and two or three gentlemen on horseback coming over the Heath, thinking they had killed those they meant to rob, took to their heels, and were soon out of sight.

Lord William got to the side of the carriage, where he leaned nearly fainting, and his wound bleeding; Lord Beaumont still insensible on the ground. The servant and passengers coming up,



were shocked to death at what they saw ; and alighting, they raised the Marquis from the ground, and ran to the next ditch for water to sprinkle on his face, for he had fainted ; the cut in his head was severe, and he bled fast. Two of the gentlemen tied up Lord William's arm, and placed him in the carriage, after forcing him to drink a little water they had brought him in a hat, having no vessel near. He thought nothing of his own wound ; he was entirely occupied about his brother, entreating the gentlemen to give their undivided attention to him ; he lamented him as if he was dead, and attempted to get out of the chaise, that he might prove whether his fears were true or not. One of the gentlemen assured him Lord Beaumont had only fainted, and they hoped there was no reason to apprehend any fatal consequence ; but Lord William could not be satisfied till he saw his bro-

ther revive, and the cut in his head bound up. They then carried him to the chaise, and placing him in it, one of the humane gentlemen entered it also, and letting down all the glasses, he seated himself between the brothers, and with his arms supported both. He ordered the postilion to drive to London; and when the other gentlemen knew who those were that had been wounded, they said they would escort the carriage to town, and sent off the groom to inform the Duke of the accident, that he might have every thing prepared for their reception, and a surgeon in waiting to examine their wounds. These amiable young men were brought in this way to Grosvenor Square, about an hour before Lord Ravensworth went there. He soon returned to Park Lane, where he found Mr. Howard and the two Peers, anxiously waiting his ap-

pearance, and he gave them pretty nearly the account we have given our readers.

Lord Ravensworth, on getting to the Duke's, found, as might be expected, every thing in the utmost confusion : a servant, knowing his intimacy with the family, shewed him into a parlour, and told him the surgeons were still in the apartments of the Marquis and Lord William ; that their wounds were dressed, and they were both got to bed ; that the Duke was almost distracted, and the Duchess extremely ill. While he was speaking, Fitzroy appeared with one of the surgeons. Lord Ravensworth had not the courage to ask what they thought, but the medical gentleman told him Mr. Heaviside had carefully examined the wounds of both, and hoped they were by no means dangerous, could a fever be prevented. Lord William had lost a vast deal of blood from his arm, and the agitation and anxiety he suffered about

the Marquis, had quickened his pulse, and made him very feverish ; but they had given him a soporific, and quieted his fears on his brother's account. " Mr. Heaviside will not leave the Marquis's bedside all night," said he ; " for he is much inclined to rave, and starts up every moment, crying out that his brother has lost his life to save him. It is fortunate the cut on his head has bled so profusely. We hope to have a better account, my Lord, to give you to-morrow."

The surgeon then quitted the room to attend his patients ; and Fitzroy said the scene of bringing the brothers into the house was a most melancholy one. " We were home a long while, and wondered what delayed Lord Beaumont's chaise, which was light, and had capital horses, when his servant came at full gallop, and desired to speak with me ; I knew the moment I saw him something terrible

had happened.. Shocked as I was when I heard all, I gave the servants the best orders I could, sent for medical help, and then went to prepare the Duke. By this time the chaise with its melancholy freight appeared, and it was with difficulty we carried our poor friends to their different apartments; both, when able to speak, anxiously inquiring for each other, and perfectly careless with respect to their own situation.

“The Marquis insisted with so much vehemence that his beloved brother had been killed in saving him, that the Duke only could appease him; and he, poor man, seeing his sons in such a state, could scarcely support his own trembling frame. As to the Duchess, she fell into such repeated fainting fits, it was impossible to allow of her going into her sons' apartments. I shall stay here all night, that I may be of some use to the poor Duke. Lady Emily never quits her

“aunt a moment. Captain Biron is here, greatly distressed for Lord William : the Duke wishes him to remain in the house, and I have persuaded him to go to bed.”

Lord Ravensworth having learned all he could from Fitzroy, and thinking it might be troublesome remaining longer, left the house, and returned to Park Lane. Mr. Howard found his account better than he expected ; for his fears had almost persuaded him the brothers were mortally wounded. The gentlemen having remained together for some time, separated for the night, hoping the morning would bring them good news from Grosvenor Square. Mr. Howard, on entering his bed-room, found Lady Gertrude asleep, and he rejoiced at being able to conceal, for some hours longer, what he knew would give her so much pain. At a very early hour he rose, and, dressing as quickly as he could,

went himself to Grosvenor Square, where the porter instantly admitted him, saying, he would call Mr. Fitzroy, who was just then going to breakfast. "He has never lain down the whole night," continued the porter, "but sat at Lord William's bedside, who, we hope, is better, as he has had some refreshing sleep."—"And how does the poor Marquis?" eagerly asked Mr. Howard. "Sir, he is in a heavy sleep at present; the beginning of the night nothing could quiet him; no one could convince him that his brother was not in the greatest danger from his wound, which he continually repeated he had got in saving him; and the surgeons have been under the necessity of giving him so much laudanum, that they expect he will sleep the whole of the day."

On Fitzroy's knowing Mr. Howard was in the house, he came to him, and

confirmed the porter's account. "I trust," said he, "these excellent young men will be soon restored to their friends; the night has passed better than we could have expected; but quiet is so absolutely necessary to their recovery, that the faculty will, I am told, for a day or two keep strict watch on us all. This is a very early hour for you to leave your bed, Howard; you had best take some breakfast with me." It was not six o'clock, and Mr. Howard followed Fitzroy to the breakfast-room, where, while they partook of what was set before them, they talked over the whole melancholy transaction. "They will not be able to apprehend the villains," said Fitzroy, "for no one thought of pursuing them, till it was too late. Poor Lindsey! I am glad he is at his house in the country, for he could never have borne the shock."—"Is not Lindsey in town?" asked Mr. Howard.



“No ; I have just written him a letter, and shall send a messenger with it presently, lest he should hear the affair suddenly, and imagine things worse than they are. I hope he will soon arrive, for Lord William has repeatedly asked for him.”—“How does the Duchess bear all this?” asked Mr. Howard. “Very ill indeed; I have a better opinion of her heart than ever I had before ; for with all her pride and vanity, she is a good mother, and her sufferings have been severe. The assurances of the surgeons have greatly calmed her, and put a stop to her fainting fits. Lady Emily has persuaded her to try and take some rest. This is an excellent creature,” said Fitzroy, colouring : “ she shews the tenderness of a child to the Duke and Duchess, and of a sister to the Marquis and Lord William ; she has been from room to room the whole night ; I

only wonder how her mind gives such strength to her delicate frame."

Mr. Howard's company was a relief to Fitzroy, and he remained with him till near nine, when he feared, should he stay longer, Lady Gertrude might be alarmed by hearing a false account from servants of the transactions of the last night. Bidding Fitzroy good morning, he returned to his own house; finding his amiable family were not yet stirring, he did not disturb them. Here we shall take breath, or a little nap, to recruit our spirits, and allow our readers to pause as long as they please, before they look into the following chapter.

## CHAP. XXXII.

“ Yes, I confess that he has won my soul,  
By gen’rous love and honourable vows.”

OTWAY.

WHEN Mr. Howard heard Lady Gertrude was risen, he went to her chamber to divulge the secret he had kept, till he could give her a tolerable account of the brothers. He softened every thing as much as truth would allow; his amiable wife, however, was extremely shocked and distressed at what he related, and made him repeat all the circumstances more than once. During this scene Caroline came to pay her morning duty to her mother, followed by Miss Westburn, and on entering the room, was terrified by Lady Gertrude’s

pale looks ; and Mr. Howard telling her what had happened, she looked wildly at him, clasped her hands together, and crying in an agony, “ Then he will die ! ” sunk senseless at his feet. Dreadfully alarmed, her father raised her in his arms ; and Lady Gertrude, in the most violent agitation, endeavoured, with the assistance of Catherine, to bring her to herself. They at last succeeded ; but she had scarcely recovered from her first fainting fit, when looking mournfully at her father, and heaving a most piteous sigh, she relapsed. Her mother, nearly frantic, had her carried to her apartment, and laying her on her bed, used every method to restore her to animation.

In some time Miss Howard was brought to herself, and her father took the first moment to assure her, that both the Marquis and Lord William were in a way to do well, and entreated

her, for his sake and her mother's, not to give such way to her feelings as to let them overcome her reason. Miss Howard looked round as if she wished to speak, and a faint colour passed over her pale cheek; her lips opened, but soon closed, without uttering a word; she seemed to have some inward struggle, and at last was relieved by a violent flood of tears.

Miss Westburn all this time stood silently at the foot of her bed; the situation of the unhappy Caroline exceedingly distressed her, for truly and affectionately did Catherine love her friend. She, for the first time, perceived Caroline's heart was not disengaged, and there could be no doubt of the object so dear to her. Catherine's wish was, to persuade Lady Gertrude and Mr. Howard to quit the chamber, and leave Caroline to her care. She hoped, when alone, to give

her friend some consolation, and by removing every other person, prevent a discovery that, perhaps, in calmer moments, Caroline might wish not made. Miss Westburn then, drawing Lady Gertrude aside, advised her to take Mr. Howard away, as she would endeavour to get Caroline to sleep, and the moment she awoke they should be informed.

This succeeded ; Lady Gertrude told her daughter she would leave her with Catherine, while she went to give Lord Bellengen his breakfast. Kissing her cheek, she entreated her to be composed, and she had no doubt they should presently have a good account from the Marquis and Lord William. At Lord William's name a hectic glow passed over Caroline's face, and promising she would try to rest, her father and mother left the room, Lady Gertrude saying, she would send breakfast

to the antechamber, and entreating Miss Westburn to persuade her friend to take some with her.

As soon as the room was clear, Miss Westburn bolted the door, and returning to the bed where her friend lay, she embraced her most tenderly, entreating her to be comforted, for she was very certain, from all she had heard, Lord William would live. Caroline, seizing her hand with eagerness, while her eyes were streaming, cried, "Catherine, are you certain? Will you swear he is not already dead? Don't deceive me, Catherine; tell me the worst at once, that my heart may burst, and I may be relieved from this load of woe." Miss Westburn, kneeling down by her, and taking her hands in hers, assured her in the most solemn manner, that neither the Marquis nor Lord William were mortally wounded. "Your father told me this at the time you lay

insensible. If you will but be composed, I will go down stairs, know from Lord Ravensworth (whose voice I heard a moment ago) every particular, and return to you as soon as possible; but you must allow your maid to stay by you while I am away."

Caroline looked earnestly in her friend's face, and then said, "Dear Catherine, you see into my heart, but I beseech you don't betray me; my happiness, even my life, may depend on your secrecy; will you promise it shall be inviolable?"—"I do most solemnly promise you," answered Catherine, "I will not divulge it to human being. Yet I believe there is one who has long known it, and I cannot, should he speak to me on the subject, answer him deceitfully."—"I know," replied Caroline, "you mean Lord Ravensworth; his conduct is on every occasion too noble for me to doubt his honour; and,



perhaps, he may not be ignorant of what passes in my heart; but, Catherine, my dear Catherine, at present do not hint any thing even to him, and return to me as quickly as you can."

Miss Westburn left her friend in the care of her maid, and going to the breakfast-room, was disappointed at not finding Lord Ravensworth. She told Lady Gertrude, Miss Howard was composed to sleep; she then took her seat at the breakfast-table, that she might hear, in a regular way, all that was to be known, and how the brothers really were; for she greatly dreaded their being worse than she chose to own to her friend. Lord Bellengen was very anxious about his grand-daughter, and praised her good-nature and sensibility. Miss Westburn having satisfied her curiosity as well as she was able, left the breakfast-room to return up stairs, and crossing the hall, she

met Lord Ravensworth, who gave her the agreeable intelligence, that the medical people at the Duke's were satisfied with the night the brothers had passed. Miss Westburn smiled with pleasure, and Lord Ravensworth, taking her hand, said tenderly, "My dear Catherine, you look as pale as a ghost; I fear your poor friend has suffered much; are you going to her?"—"I am," replied the amiable girl. "Your good news will be a cordial."—"I know you will be attentive to her," replied the Earl; and imprinting a kiss on the hand he held, added, "For my sake, my love, be careful of yourself." Catherine answered by an affectionate look, and begging he would inform her as often as possible how every thing went on at the Duke's. Returned to the apartment of her friend, she dismissed the maid, and having again secured the door, she

gave all the comfort she could give, by repeating Lord Ravensworth's conversation.

Our distressed Caroline in vain courted sleep ; it would not come ; and pulling back the bed-curtain, which Catherine had drawn to exclude the light, she entreated her to come near. Miss Westburn obeyed ; and kneeling by the bedside, they entered into a confidential conversation, and Caroline gave her the whole history of her life from the moment she first saw Lord William and his brother at Lyons, not omitting a single circumstance ; not even the conversation at the abbey, and the determination of herself and Lord William to avoid all opportunities of meeting alone, or of giving the least intimation of their mutual attachment. " It was fortunate," said Miss Howard, " there were no more witnesses to my weakness this day, or I

met Lord Ravensworth, who gave her the agreeable intelligence, that the medical people at the Duke's were satisfied with the night the brothers had passed. Miss Westburn smiled with pleasure, and Lord Ravensworth, taking her hand, said tenderly, "My dear Catherine, you look as pale as a ghost; I fear your poor friend has suffered much; are you going to her?"—"I am," replied the amiable girl. "Your good news will be a cordial."—"I know you will be attentive to her," replied the Earl; and imprinting a kiss on the hand he held, added, "For my sake, my love, be careful of yourself." Catherine answered by an affectionate look, and begging he would inform her as often as possible how every thing went on at the Duke's. Returned to the apartment of her friend, she dismissed the maid, and having again secured the door, she

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acquainted with what had happened, and if she felt any concern. His father entreated him to compose himself if he valued his peace of mind, or his mother's; assured him, that not only Miss Howard, but all his friends in Park Lane, were as much affected by the accident, and as anxious for his and Lord William's recovery, as friends could be. Lord Beaumont smiled, pressed his father's hand, and, oppressed by the opium, sunk into a slumber. The Duke was advised to leave him to rest, as the best means of dislodging the fever that preyed upon him.

Lord William, towards the middle of the day, became impatient to see Mr. Lindsey; hearing he was in the country, he appeared distressed, and asked, had a messenger been sent to him? The servant he questioned could not inform him. Lord William's fever was only produced by the great loss of

blood he had had, and the violent pain his wound had given him. His arm was sadly swelled, and stiff. He seemed to the person who attended him to be so uneasy, and sighed so heavily, that he passed into the Duke's dressing-room (which was near), to say he would be glad if he could see his son, as the surgeon had left the house till the evening, and he feared Lord William was not so well as he had been.

The good Duke instantly followed the servant to his son's apartment, and approaching the bed, heard him sigh heavily. He nodded to the attendant to quit the room and close the door, and sitting down by the bed-side, asked Lord William what oppressed him, and if he found himself worse? "No, my dear father," he replied; "I am doing very well; my wound indeed pains me extremely, but that is nothing;" and again he sighed most pro-

foundly. “William,” cried the Duke, “you are unhappy; are you afraid to communicate the cause to your father?” Lord William was silent. “You have asked for Lindsey,” continued the Duke; “I have sent for him; he cannot be here till to-morrow; but surely, my child, you may disclose any thing that sits heavy on your mind to a father, whose whole happiness is centred in you and your brother.”

Lord William stretched out his well hand, and grasping his father’s which lay on the bed, he pressed it to his lips, and burst into tears. The Duke, greatly affected, said, “William, why these tears? I guess your secret; I have watched your conduct, and approve it. You are a noble boy. Console yourself, William; you could not with virtue act otherwise than you do.”—“I know it,” cried Lord William. “You, my father, shall never have reason to



blame my conduct. Your candour must allow my fate is hard, my struggle a severe one."

The Duke agreed in opinion with his amiable son, and gave him all due praise. "My dear father, be secret, I beseech you."—"I will, my child; the happiness and peace of our family depends on our prudence."—"Remove me," cried Lord William, "remove me when I am recovered, where I shall not see the too dangerous and fascinating Caroline. I have not courage of myself to avoid her; for this reason I solicited you to allow of my going into the army, not that I hoped, by so doing, to lose my sorrow, or my love, but to prevent the misery that my brother's discovering my fatal attachment might produce."

The Duke was infinitely distressed; he saw the happiness of his beloved sons destroyed; he had no power to

avert their fate, and his internal struggle was great in order to conceal from Lord William what he felt and what he feared. “We will consult together when you are well,” said this good father. “Endeavour to compose your mind, or your wound will not readily heal.”

The Duke was going to retire, when his son caught him by the arm: “Since you know all,” said he, “tell me, how does Miss Howard do? How has she borne the news of our disaster?” —“All your friends have been shocked and distressed,” replied the Duke; “Miss Howard particularly so. Fitzroy tells me, she fainted on hearing it; her doing so was only attributed to the sensibility of her nature.” —“Oh! that I could see any one that has seen her!” interrupted Lord William. “It is imprudent to wish it,” replied the Duke; “but if you will promise me

to make your mind easy, I will go myself to Park Lane this evening, see Caroline if she is visible, and bring you a faithful account of how I find her."

This promise was the greatest comfort to the poor invalid ; he thanked his tender parent in the warmest terms, he entreated him to pardon all his faults, and any concealment he might have had from him, and assured him in future he would be all he could desire. " You are, my dearest son," cried the Duke, " all I can wish, all I can desire. Would to heaven I could this moment bestow upon you the object of your affection ! She is just the wife I should choose for you, had I the power of doing so ; but while your brother persists in his attachment, it is a bar that we cannot pass : to attempt it might be fatal to us all. Your brother, amiable and excellent as his character is, has ungovernable passions ; opposition would

render him furious ; and I tremble, in that case, to think what the catastrophe might prove.”—“ So do I,” mildly answered Lord William. “ I am willing to be the present sacrifice ; time only can befriend me.”

Much more conversation ensued between the father and son ; being nearly the same as what has passed, we shall not relate it, but leaving our young friend more calm than we found him, attend the Duke to the drawing-room, where he found Lord Ravensworth and Mr. Howard. The Duchess, though pale and low, was much better than she had been, and received comfort from the Duke’s account of her son. The physicians had been under the necessity of absolutely prohibiting her entrance into the sick chambers : her distress had been so great, and she had so little command of her own feelings, they dreaded bad consequences to all parties,

should she see her son till all danger was completely over. On the entrance of the Duke, she expressed great gratitude for the kindness and attention of the Howards; and the Duke said, before Mr. Howard left the room, he would wait upon Lady Gertrude for a quarter of an hour in the evening, and he hoped to bring her a pleasing account of his sons.

This accident, and all the bustle that attended it, had assisted in furthering the growing attachment of Fitzroy to Lady Emily; hers had long been decided, his was fluctuating, till he beheld her placed in so amiable a light, that he no longer refused her his heart.

“How weak in life, how helpless is a woman,  
And often wounded while she plucks the rose!  
So properly the object of affliction,  
That Heaven is pleas'd to make distress become  
her,  
And dresses her most amiably in tears.”

Thus thought Fitzroy; and in the midst of the distress they all suffered on account of the two brothers, he yielded to the fair Emily a heart truly worthy of her acceptance, and that but for the present situation of things might have held out a long siege.

You will, perhaps, be surprised, my fair readers, when I assure you, it is easier to captivate a heart worth having, amid the calm domestic scenes of life, than you will find it in a splendid ball-room, where you may think yourselves irresistible, as yon large mirror shews to the greatest advantage your lovely form and face, set off by the most fashionable and glittering decorations. Bewitching as your appearance may be, you are not in these scenes of gaiety possessed of that magic charm which surrounds you, when, unadorned, you lean, with anxious solicitude (your eye beaming pity, your cheek flushed

with hope) over the sick couch of a suffering friend, endeavouring to sooth those griefs you could not avert, and shedding a tear of sympathy and sensibility to sorrows not your own. Where beauty and a feeling soul are united, the heart of man has no power of resistance; and your influence, if not abused, continues for life. Delightful assurance to those who are formed to adorn, and really love domestic life! and many such, we hope, exist even in this age of folly and dissipation.

Miss Howard, as she had intended, rose in time for dinner, and appeared there with more composure in her countenance than Catherine had expected. Mr. Howard returned from Grosvenor Square with a more favourable account of the invalids than was true; for the Marquis's fever ran very high, though the surgeons did not choose to alarm the family by saying so. Dinner passed off

tolerably well ; the conversation chiefly turned on the brothers, and their good fortune in escaping with their lives. Miss Howard was a great deal annoyed by Lord Derwentwater's scrutinizing looks, and she heartily wished him away, though her grandfather's guest.

The ladies had scarcely risen from the dessert, when the Duke of Cathmore arrived to pay his compliments to Lady Gertrude. On entering, he told her how truly the Duchess and he felt her kindness, and that of the young ladies. " I come," said he, " loaded with messages. Beaumont has less fever this evening, and I have no doubt, a short time will quite restore William." While he spoke, he watched Miss Howard's face ; she sat in a distant part of the room, inwardly trembling with a thousand fears she could not account for.

Lady Gertrude said on the occasion all a kind and anxious friend could say ; and



as soon as the gentlemen joined the party, the Duke going to where Miss Howard sat, told her in a low voice, that he very much wished to have half an hour's conversation with her : “ but it must be without witnesses,” whispered the Duke ; “ what I have to say is for your ear alone ; can you give me an audience in the breakfast-room, before I leave the house ? In a quarter of an hour I shall quit this room ; say, my dear Miss Howard, will you condescend to grant my request ?”—“ It is impossible Your Grace could make a request I should not wish to grant,” replied Miss Howard ; “ give me some intimation before you retire, and I will meet you below stairs.” The Duke bowed, and, turning from her, entered into conversation with the rest of the company.

Miss Howard whispered Catherine what had passed in conversation with the Duke, and desired her not to follow

her when she left the room. They both were certain that the Duke brought some message from Lord Beaumont.

In about a quarter of an hour His Grace gave a sign to Miss Howard: unperceived she quitted the room, and passing down stairs to the breakfast-parlour, was ready to admit him when he tapped at the door. She had just a moment to recollect herself, and to consider what answer she could return to the Marquis, expressive of kind solicitude for him, and at the same time cutting off all hope of its proceeding from any thing but friendship. On Miss Howard's opening the door, the Duke closed it after him, and taking her by the hand, led her to a seat, and placed himself next her. There was something so solemn and sad in his countenance, that it alarmed Caroline; and she said, in a terrified and faltering voice, "O Duke, have you any thing dreadful to tell me,

that you would not mention up stairs?" The Duke, shocked at seeing her turn deadly pale, assured her he had not any bad news, and begged she would not give way to false fears : he stopped, and she looked at him, as if she expected he would continue his discourse. He saw her impatience to know what his private audience with her tended to, and said, "My dear Miss Howard, I anxiously wished for a private conversation with you, and now I know not in what way to begin: will you allow me to express my admiration of your conduct, and the gratitude I feel for it? I have long known, at least I have believed I knew, the attachment that has subsisted between you and William." (Miss Howard started.) "Do not start, my dear girl. That you should love each other, I cannot wonder; but I am indeed astonished, that to this hour, so young, and so attached, you should both have conducted yourselves

with such prudence, so much good sense, and feeling for others."

Miss Howard covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears. "Why," cried the Duke, "why these tears? Surely no blame can attach to you or my son for the union of your hearts. Can any thing be more natural than that, living so much together as you have done, you should be sensible of each other's merits?"—"Oh!" cried Caroline, "would we had never met! it will involve us all in misery!"—"Not so, my fair friend," answered the Duke, kindly taking her hand; "while you both act with the propriety you have hitherto done, you need fear nothing."—"Oh yes," resumed Caroline in great agitation, "we have both every thing to fear; we are surely fated to endure much misery. Should the Marquis once suspect Lord William, how will he be persuaded of his innocence or of mine? Believe me, my dear

Lord, I never gave the most trifling encouragement to the Marquis ; and if my too wayward heart could not refuse its affections to Lord William, I never indulged them, nor did I wish to gain his love at the price of his peace of mind.” —“ I am well convinced of this, my dear Miss Howard ; I have this morning had a conversation with William on the subject : it is to gratify him that I am here this evening. I assured him I would see and speak with you. Fitzroy had told him how dreadfully you were affected at the terrible accident that had befallen him and Beaumont ; and it appears to every one that you are equally concerned for both the brothers.” Caroline smiled through her tears ; Lord William knew her sufferings, and they were repaid.

The Duke perceived the satisfaction of her countenance, but not appearing to notice it, he continued : “ Now, my

sweet young lady, bear with patience what I am going to say. I believe that your sentiments and William's are a profound secret : what I wish is, that they may still remain so ; I even wish the Duchess to continue in ignorance on this subject, for her comfort as well as ours. You are sensible poor Beaumont is madly in love with you ; and Heaven knows, were William out of the question, with what delight I should see you Marchioness of Beaumont. As it is, I must relinquish such a wish. Both my sons are dear, very dear to me ; and I cannot, I must not be unjust to either. You will not accept the Marquis ; you cannot, without destruction to him, marry his brother at the present. I need not tell you the violence of Beaumont's temper : amiable as he is, you are sensible it bears down all before it ; and were he for a moment to conceive himself betrayed by his brother, we know not

what dreadful consequences might ensue." Caroline shuddered; she felt it was too true. "What I have farther to add, my dear Miss Howard, is this: you and William must part, at least for some time; your meeting constantly might bring innumerable evils on both; a look, an unguarded word, may betray you." (The Duke saw Caroline deeply affected.) "I do not bid you," continued he in the most softened accent, "cease to love my son—I hope that is impossible; I only entreat you to be satisfied with his absence for a time: hope the best: if we do not oppose Beaumont, he may not long follow an *ignis fatuus*."—"And am I not to see Lord William when he is able to leave his chamber?" asked Caroline mournfully. "You shall certainly see him," said the Duke; "I put no constraint on him or you, I only advise; and knowing what will most conduce to your future good,

I flatter myself I shall not give advice in vain.”—“ You shall not indeed, my Lord ; I will implicitly follow all your wishes ; command me as you think proper ; you shall find I will not shrink from what is right.”

The Duke, highly charmed with this interesting girl, mentally prayed that he might yet see her the wife of his beloved William, and rising, asked, had she not some message to send him ? “ I will faithfully deliver it,” said he, smiling.

Caroline blushed, hesitated, and then said, “ Since you, my Lord, encourage me to send one, I beseech you to tell him I am unchangeable.”—“ You are an angel,” cried the Duke, advancing to the door. Caroline stopped him. “ I have one thing to mention, my Lord, before you leave me : I must inform my father and mother of all that has passed between us ; hitherto they are ig-



norant of the secret your penetration has discovered ; I should now think myself extremely culpable to have any further concealment from them.”—“ You are right in that as in every thing else,” replied the Duke ; “ Heaven will protect so much sweetness, innocence, and truth.” He kissed Caroline’s hand, and retired.

The breakfast-room opened into the small garden belonging to the house. The day was only closing in, and Miss Howard descending a few steps passed up and down the walk, hoping that the fresh air might remove the traces of the tears she had shed. Looking up, she saw Miss Westburn at a window, and beckoning to her, she was at her side in a few minutes. Caroline made her friend acquainted with the Duke’s conversation, and mentioned her determination of communicating every thing to Lady Gertrude and her father. Miss

Westburn applauded her intentions, and then with some hesitation told her Lord Ravensworth had just been talking to her on the subject, and expressing his pity for her and Lord William.

Caroline was agitated and confused. "How poor mortals deceive themselves!" said she; "how foolishly I must have acted, to betray myself in this manner!"—"You cannot surely be afraid of Lord Ravensworth, Caroline," answered Miss Westburn; "he is ready to serve you and Lord William to the utmost of his power; and his perfect prudence and secrecy you may rely on."—"I know I may, Catherine; he is an amiable creature; your union will be a blessed one."

Lady Gertrude, calling to the young friends from the window, put at end to their conversation, and they entered the house together. They all remained quietly at home; it was not in the na-

ture of the Howards to resort to public places for amusement, while their friends languished on a sick bed.

As soon as Lady Gertrude retired for the night, Caroline followed her, taking that opportunity of opening her whole heart to her mother, and of relating the conversation she had had with the Duke. Lady Gertrude was not much surprised at her daughter's confession. Some words that Caroline had dropped in the morning, when she heard of the accident the brothers had met with, had divulged the secret of her heart to her parents. They were certain she could not have felt with such agony for the man she had so often rejected ; Lord William naturally occurred to them as the object of her affection, and he who had rendered her so insensible to the merits of other men.

Mr. Howard entered the apartment as Caroline wished to retire ; but Lady Gertrude made a sign to her to remain,

and informed him of the subject of their conversation. Both these amiable parents were troubled; they pitied Caroline, and could not condemn her choice; they did not attempt to shake her affection for Lord William; but, loving her as they did, they lamented things had taken so wayward a turn, and dreaded the event; but what, they thought, could now be done? They took the kind part of supporting and comforting their poor Caroline; they kissed and blessed her in dismissing her for the night, the half of which they spent in conversation respecting her and the brothers; and they resolved, as soon as they prudently could, to leave London, to give no encouragement to Lord Derwentwater, and for the present to remain silent to Lord Belengen on all that had passed.

Reader, if at this hour of the night

“ Sleep lays his leaden mace upon you,”

as heavily as on me, had I the power to add another sentence to this chapter, you would not have the power to peruse it. Adieu for the dark hours only; I shall awake you with the lark.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

" With throbbing head and anxious heart,  
 All in her lonely bower apart,  
     In broken sleep she lay ;  
 By times from silken couch she rose ;  
 - - - - -  
     And view'd the dawning day :  
 Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,  
 First woke the loveliest and the best."

Miss Howard, though highly gratified by the Duke's particular kindness to her, and the great approbation he had expressed of her conduct, felt, that in performing the task she had imposed on herself, she rent her heart in sunder. She considered her fate as severe, in making her happiness depend on the caprice of a man she could not love. " What obligation," thought she, " am I under to relinquish Lord William, that

I may not be the cause of unhappiness to the Marquis? What right can he have to put a bar between his brother and me, and to persecute me with a love that is disgusting to me?" Though alone, she blushed at harbouring these sentiments. "Could I," said she mentally, "be happy, were I to disunite two such brothers, to part those who from their infancy have been the model of fraternal affection? Has not Lord William just given a proof that his brother's life was dearer to him than his own? And is not the Marquis's illness increased by anxiety for that brother, that friend, that I have dared to think of separating from him? I will banish an idea so selfish, so injurious to my honour, one that must lower me in my own opinion, and in that of the whole world. Could I enjoy peace of mind, with the conviction that self entirely influenced my conduct? No; never will I thus sink

my character ; I will dare to be unhappy, but I will not dare to act wrong."

In such reflections as these, poor Caroline passed most of the night ; the fear of being soon separated from Lord William, preyed upon her spirits ; though convinced it was the only prudent step she could take, to feel satisfied was impossible. Not finding any repose, she rose at an early hour, and went down to the breakfast-room, where, opening the glass-door into the garden, she felt revived by the balmy breath of the morning : from the situation of the room she had a view of the rising sun, which brought the whole scene at the ruins so strongly to her remembrance, that she almost believed she saw Lord William at her feet, and heard him in tender accents repeat his vows of eternal love. Unwilling to indulge this softness, ill calculated to strengthen her prudent resolutions, and thinking it too early to



disturb her friend, she sought amusement from her harp ;

“ Touch’d a wild note, and all between,  
Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.”

Poor Caroline ! she deceived herself in hoping that music would banish love ; it only now served to bring every look, every word, every action of Lord William’s more strongly to memory ; and she deeply sighed to think, that, possessed of all the world could give, disappointed love embittered every joy. Long and deep were her reflections : she found some comfort in having now no concealment from Mr. Howard and Lady Gertrude, and her determination was, to be guided by these kind parents in all but withdrawing her heart from Lord William. For a moment she was terrified at Lord Derwentwater’s perseverance, and at Lord Bellengen’s encouragement of his addresses : but fairly

considering the mild influence her parents had ever exerted over her, and their extreme indulgence, she endeavoured to banish all her fears, convinced she could depend on them for tenderness and protection. Lost in these reflections, time passed unperceived, and towards eight o'clock she was surprised by seeing Lord Ravensworth enter the room. He was uneasy at finding her so early up, and looking so ill; and fearing she was miserable on Lord William's account, hastened to tell her he was just come from Grosvenor Square, and had the satisfaction of assuring her Lord William had had a very good night, and awoke without fever.

Caroline blushed, and her eyes expressed a pleasure she could not conceal. "And the Marquis—I hope he too is better."—"No, my dear Miss Howard, I grieve to say the Marquis is very ill; his fever runs high, his night has been

terribly disturbed, and the physicians are greatly alarmed." Miss Howard was shocked; her heart softened in Lord Beaumont's favour, and she sincerely prayed for his recovery. Lord Ravensworth, who was a witness to these feelings, saw it was a favourable opportunity to hint to her his knowledge of her sentiments, and to offer his friendship and assistance, should she stand in need of either.

Caroline considered that now to have any reserve with so amiable a man as he was, and one so soon to be the husband of her friend, would be folly instead of delicacy. A most confidential conversation took place, and before it was ended Miss Westburn joined them. For an hour they indulged in all those soft sympathies of friendship which knit kindred minds so close. Miss Howard, grateful for the tenderness she met, felt in part relieved from the weight that had

oppressed her mind: she was not now under the necessity of confining all her uneasiness to her own bosom; she had kind friends ready to sympathize with her, and, if needful, give her the best advice.

Lord Ravensworth was more anxious than ever that his lawyers should hasten every thing for his marriage, as he hoped to prevail on the Howards to accompany him and his bride into Hampshire. That Miss Howard ought not to remain longer in London was his decided opinion.

Here we will avoid sick rooms, and, passing over a very dull fortnight, touch lightly on what occurred during that period.

Lord William recovered rapidly, but the Marquis continued for some days in so high a fever, that his life was in the utmost danger. During the height of his illness he raved continually of Miss Howard, entreating his brother to bring her to him. Lord William, as soon as

ne was able to sit up, could not be prevented taking his station by the Marquis's bed-side: his grief was unbounded while any danger continued. Mr. Lindsey, Fitzroy, and Lord Ravensworth, were almost continually at the Duke's, and one of them constantly remained with Lord William.

The Duke and Duchess were inconsolable while the physicians entertained apprehensions for the life of their son. The Howards shewed every attention that could be expected from the nearest friends, and were always admitted at Grosvenor Square. Lady Gertrude went nowhere else; nor did she admit company during this distressing period. Caroline and Miss Westburn gave their time to Lady Emily, whose conduct to her cousin was that of a sister.

At length Lord Beaumont's fever came to a crisis; he was pronounced out of danger, and the joy was universal. Lord

William seemed restored to new life ; and the day after the physicians gave this happy assurance, the Howards, Lord Ravensworth, and Miss Westburn, spent the evening with the Duchess in her dressing-room, and for the first time Lord William joined them, his pale face illumined with pleasure at his brother's convalescent state.

Never before was Lord William so dangerous to Miss Howard's peace ; the bloom of youth, health, and beauty had never given such tender emotions to her bosom, as she felt while contemplating his form, languid from illness, the pallid hue of his cheek, and his arm useless in a sling. All his amiable qualities rushed upon her mind in full force, and rendered him at the moment the most fascinating object in the world. Secret, but mutual, was their joy at meeting, after an absence of such terror. Catherine and Lord Ravensworth facilitated some happy mi-

notes private conversation between them, and Caroline had an opportunity of making Lord William acquainted with the interview between her and the Duke. He was penetrated with his father's goodness, and the prudent resolutions of the lovers were more firmly fixed than ever.

The evening passed in a delightful and sociable manner; and in another week Lord Beaumont was so much recovered, he had only weakness to combat, which the open air and gentle exercise soon overcame. Lord Ravensworth's marriage was to take place in ten days, and Lady Gertrude Howard could form no pretence for leaving London till it was over. The Westburns were expected in a day or two, and again the young people partook of all the entertainments that at so late a season were going on in the capital. Lord Bellengen, who had not visited England for years,

found infinite amusement in seeing every thing worthy of notice ; and meeting with many old friends, he never wanted society, even at the time he did not enter into the particular amusements of his family.

Lord Beaumont, on his recovery, again renewed his attentions to Miss Howard ; but she avoided giving him the least encouragement, or any opportunity of speaking to her in private ; and finding her so cold and distant to himself, he waited on Lady Gertrude, and besought her to use her interest with her daughter in his favour, and he urged all that a lover could urge on the occasion. Lady Gertrude advised his dropping the pursuit of one so little inclined to listen to him, and calmly laid before him how great a misfortune it would be to him, should any thing tempt her daughter to give her hand without her heart. “ I only place it in this point of



view," said she to Lord Beaumont, "to reconcile you to the disappointment you may suffer; I am well convinced my daughter would sooner die than be guilty of such an outrage to your honour and your love; I will inform her of your wishes, but I will not use the smallest influence to change her conduct, where I know it is what it ought to be."—

"Then you too are against me," cried the Marquis, with an expression of resentment. "No, my Lord, I am your friend; I wish present passion not to blind you, to the misery of a life dragged on with one, who, though she might esteem you, declares she can never love you as a husband; and that were she forced to accept you as such, she should for ever lament the tie that bound her."—

"Were Miss Howard's heart another's," replied Lord Beaumont with quickness, and fixing his penetrating eyes on Lady Gertrude; "were it in the possession

of a happier man, I would not urge my suit again; but as that is not the case, and she treats every one with indifference, I had hoped that the ardour of my affection might overcome the habitual coldness of her nature, and that hereafter I might have the ecstatic conviction of making her as happy as she would make me."

Lady Gertrude was shocked; she scarcely knew what answer to return, but regaining her presence of mind, said smiling, to conceal her agitation, "There is no arguing with lovers; I will call my daughter to answer for herself." And opening a door which led into a little room that Caroline and Catherine occupied in the morning, she beckoned Miss Howard, and in the presence of the Marquis repeated his conversation. She was about to leave the chamber, when Caroline begged she would stay; and with great dignity, at

the same time with good-nature and politeness, insisted on never again hearing another word on the subject of love from the Marquis. She declared, though she greatly esteemed him, she never would be his ; and any farther attempt on his part to renew the subject, either through others or from himself, must render them enemies. She added, she did not think herself bound to give any reason for her conduct, as her father and mother allowed her a free choice ; and the Marquis must do her the justice to own she had never given him the least degree of encouragement.

The Marquis stood almost petrified, and answered with a deep sigh, “ No, certainly, Miss Howard ; no encouragement ! I see my doom is sealed, the last ray of hope is vanished ; pardon me any uneasiness I may have given you by my violent and hasty temper. I must fly from you, and perhaps seek in some

other corner of the world, the peace I have lost here." With these words, and kissing Lady Gertrude's hand as she stood near him, he left the room. Miss Howard's courage failed with his last words, and bursting into tears, she cried, "Why will not this amiable man look on me only as a sister?" Lady Gertrude endeavoured to comfort her, declaring she thought it a happy circumstance that a final issue was put to his pretensions, and she trusted absence would effect his cure.

Lord Beaumont, on leaving the house, turned into the Park, to ruminate in silence, and alone, on what course he should pursue. Honour and a degree of pride now prevented any renewal of his addresses to Caroline. His vision of happiness was at an end. He was convinced he never should love any other woman. Where could he go? What was now worthy of occupying his mind?

The pleasures of London were tasteless; they had never greatly captivated him: to continually expose himself to meet Miss Howard, would only add fuel to a flame, he feared, without her presence would burn too fiercely to leave him a moment's peace. He took a survey of the state of things. All Europe was involved in war: he could not now travel on the Continent. Buonaparte had just threatened the Austrians; they might soon be obliged to yield to his decrees: but Prussia was still in amity with us. He had some friends at Berlin. He was intimate with Lord Hutchinson, who was now there. A scene of bustle might have power to draw his mind from his own sorrows and disappointments; and should an occasion offer, he might perhaps as a volunteer distinguish himself. The greater the danger, the more (he at that moment felt) he should like to

be involved in it, and he hoped that Love would vanish before

“The pride, pomp, circumstance, of glorious war.”

Full of these ideas, and determined on leaving England, he hastened to Grosvenor Square, to declare his intentions to the Duke, and entreat him to persuade his mother to be satisfied. With hurried steps and a flushed countenance he entered his father's study, and somewhat abruptly (for his soul was full of it) he repeated to the Duke all that had passed at Park Lane, and Miss Howard's final rejection of him, with his determination of quitting England in a few days.

The Duke was at first astonished, and sat perfectly silent, till Lord Beaumont again repeated his wish that his leaving England should meet with his father's approbation ; and now, flushed with

the idea of glory, he urged with vehemence an answer. The worthy Duke grieved at a separation from a child so dear, but considering the predicament in which his son was placed, he could see no scheme more to approve, than the one pointed out; and he told the Marquis, he wished him to act as would tend most to his own comfort.

While they were on this topic, Lord William entered, totally ignorant of the morning's transactions, and seeing his father and brother in earnest discourse, was about to withdraw, when the Marquis entreated he would stay, and hear what were his present intentions, and the reasons for them. Lord William turned to a window to conceal the emotions his brother's account of Miss Howard's rejection of him caused. His surprise was great at hearing the Marquis's determination to quit the

country; it visibly affected him, and Lord Beaumont said, "Pray, William, don't shew so much concern—it hurts me; I am sufficiently distressed in leaving you, don't let me see you so disturbed by it."—"Leaving me!" cried Lord William (coming towards his brother, and affectionately laying his hand on his shoulder); "you shall not leave me; do you think I would allow it? Nothing could tempt me to stay behind, and let you go to another country, unhappy and alone. If your fate banishes you from your friends, so does mine; we shall less feel the severity of it when we are together: I am ready to depart as soon as you wish."

The Marquis was astonished; and tenderly embracing his brother, declared, since he would bear him company, he should look on his voyage and journey, as a voyage and journey of



pleasure, not of necessity. They then both entreated the Duke to reconcile the Duchess to their departure; he promised to do so, and though he sadly felt the privation of two such sons, he approved their determination, inwardly prayed for blessings to attend them, and gloried more in being father to such amiable young men, than in his dukedom. He sincerely pitied the Marquis; he knew his ardent mind too well not to appreciate his sufferings, and he admired the strong and noble mind of Lord William; persevering in what was right, at the moment that his doing so cut him off from all that could give him delight.

The Duke soon passed into the Duchess's apartments. When he informed her of the resolution their sons had come to, she was greatly distressed. She grieved for the loss of their society, and felt terror at the danger they might

encounter at the seat of war. Seeing the misery of the Marquis, she at last yielded with the best grace she could to his ardent desire of going abroad, and soon every thing was appointed for their sailing with the first messenger sent to Berlin.

Mr. Lindsey felt deeply the separation from his young friends, whom he almost looked on as his children ; but considering their plan the most prudent that could be adopted, he set all selfish considerations aside, and encouraged them in putting it into immediate execution. Their intended departure was soon known in Park Lane, and filled Caroline with grief. How, she thought, could Lord William leave her, if he was so strongly attached to her as he wished her to believe ? Was there any necessity for his accompanying his brother out of the kingdom ? Was he doubtful of his own propriety of con-

duct, or of hers, that he should willingly banish himself from her presence? Such were her reflections on first being told what must give her such pain. A little consideration satisfied her of the propriety and delicacy of Lord William's conduct; she blushed for her own weakness, and rejoiced that nothing could warp the mind of the man she loved.

A day or two sufficed to settle every thing for the departure of the brothers; they were known at the court they were going to, and letters of introduction were unnecessary. The day was appointed for their leaving London, and the intervening time was spent, as usual, with their friends. The Marquis and Miss Howard behaved to each other with their former good-humour and friendship; and whatever Lord Beaumont endured, the wish of giving Caroline no farther offence predominated,

and kept love within bounds. He offered to carry any letters or message she should honour him with to Teresa, whom, from what her brother Baron Issindorffe had said, he expected to find at Berlin with her family. Caroline promised the Marquis a packet for her friend, and charged him to answer all Teresa's questions minutely. Lord Beaumont replied, with a sigh he could not suppress, he should ever implicitly obey her commands.

Wednesday was the day named for the departure of the young noblemen. Mr. and Mrs. Westburn being come to town, the Duke and Duchess wished the whole party to dine at their house the day antecedent to it, and invited Captain Biron and Fitzroy to join them. Dinner passed with tolerable cheerfulness, and it was proposed to go to the opera and sup at Lady Gertrude's: they

all wished to put off the farewell scene as long as possible.

Miss Howard, who had found it difficult to support herself during dinner, entreated her mother to allow her, when they all went to the opera, to be set down at home. "Do not, my dear mother," said she, "mention my intention, for the Duchess will persecute me to be of the party; I really have not spirits for it; but you shall see how well I will conduct myself at supper, after an hour or two of quiet." Lady Gertrude agreed to do as Caroline wished, and would have more willingly staid with her sorrowing child, than have followed the Duchess to the opera; but prudence bid her put a restraint on her feelings; and she and Miss Westburn having set Caroline down in Park Lane, proceeded to the Haymarket.

Our heroine, as she ascended the

stairs, found comfort in the quiet that reigned in the house; and passing to the drawing-room, she desired a servant to bring lights and tea. On entering the room she threw herself on a couch which was shaded by a large folding screen, and placed opposite a window that looked to the Park, and through which the soft beams of the moon fell on the floor. She leaned on a small table placed near her, and covering her face with her handkerchief, gave full scope to a shower of tears, that relieved her aching heart.

Condemn not this, my fair readers, as a weakness in Caroline; at such a period as this, had she been composed, she would have been devoid of feeling, and not worthy the affections of those amiable men, who were now voluntarily banishing themselves from their country and their friends on her account. She loved Lord William, she pitied the

Marquis : her conduct had been faultless ; from this she derived comfort ; but still she was unfortunate. Lord William was to bid her adieu this very night. What might happen in the lapse of time ! She could not endure to doubt his truth, she could not harbour a suspicion of him ; yet absence was the grave of love, and should she be forgotten, even cherished less than at the present moment, happiness would fly for ever. Soon she banished such ideas as these, so injurious to Lord William, and dwelt only on his sufferings. Every word he had ever uttered to her, the whole of his conduct even when she thought him to blame, were so many proofs of his constant, his perfect attachment, and now brought consolation to her heart. She was interrupted in her contemplations by the servant bringing in lights and tea. She desired that the tapers might be

set at a distance, and ordered the tea to be placed on a table by her, saying, she would ring when she wanted any thing.

Still Miss Howard sat on the sofa, still at times shed tears, that fell on her soft and lovely cheeks, like dew-drops on opening roses. Half an hour had elapsed, and Caroline, displeased with herself for indulging this melancholy, that only tended to soften her mind, was rising to look for a book, and bring a light from the end of the room, where they had been placed, when the door of the apartment opening, Lord William was in a moment at her feet. She placed herself again on the sofa; she had not power to stand. This was a pleasure as great as unexpected; and yet she was not satisfied that Lord William's being there was proper. "My love, my Caroline," cried he, seizing her passive hands, "are you displeased



with me for taking the only moment I can have to see you alone, before I quit England, to assure you of my constancy, of my eternal truth? to declare, that, till I behold you again, nothing shall have power to withdraw my thoughts a moment from the only object they can ever rest upon with love? Can you, when I am on the eve of departure, be angry at my snatching these few moments of felicity?"—"Angry!" said Caroline, with the sweetest and most bashful expression of countenance; "that I cannot be; but I fear this visit may be discovered, and appear very extraordinary. Your father may be displeased at it; it may excite suspicions in the Marquis, and involve us all in distress, at the instant that it costs us both so dear to prevent the misery of others."—"Fear nothing, my angel Caroline," resumed Lord William. "Not finding you at the

opera, I guessed where you were, and mentioning to Ravensworth what comfort it would be to me to see you alone for a quarter of an hour, he took me by the arm, and saying, loud enough to be heard, that he had something for me to do for him this very night, desired I would go with him to the next coffee-house, and telling Lady Gertrude we should both be here at supper, we left the house together. Ravensworth is in the antechamber, and you need fear no surprise." Caroline was calmed, and could not refuse either Lord William or herself the comfort of an hour's conversation, as she knew not when their separation might end. She entreated him to rise (for he was still kneeling at her feet), and take a place by her on the sofa. He obeyed, and the most tender and interesting conversation ensued.

My fair readers must not expect a

disclosure of every word that proceeded from the coral lips of Caroline, or from the faithful heart of Lord William. All that could gratify such pure and tender souls as theirs, was often repeated by both, without their being sensible that the repetition was made; but sacred to lovers be their loves! Suffice it to say, that Lord William obtained from the charming Caroline, a lovely and perfect representation of herself just painted by a famous artist. He received it with transport, and placing it in his bosom, declared it would be a charm to banish every grief, but that of being separated from her. He begged her acceptance of a miniature he should leave with Lord Ravensworth before he quitted London in the morning. She yielded, nothing loath, to his request, and it was only the loud thunder of a London knocker, that declared the opera at an end, and

that they had spent three hours together ; also, that Lord Ravensworth had been so long on his post, entertained solely by his own contemplations. He now, without ceremony, entered the drawing-room, and displacing Lord William, sat himself down between the lovers.

The Duchess said, on entering, “ So, you are both here before us ; you had a loss ; the opera was charming to-night, and you know it is the last.”—“ Is it ? ” said Lord Ravensworth, carelessly. “ When Lord William and I had settled our business, we thought it too late to return.”—“ What a lazy being ! ” whispered Lord Beaumont to Catherine. “ If I were you, I should be highly offended with him.”—“ And so I am,” said Catherine. “ He shall feel my wrath for his neglect ; if he had had but the hundredth part of a minute to spare, he should have returned to es-

court me out of the house." Lady Gertrude heard this, and joined in the laugh against Lord Ravensworth, though she guessed how matters had been conducted. She easily read Caroline's countenance, and she perceived a cup of cold, untouched tea on the table. Lord Bellengen, who had spent the evening at the little theatre, now arrived attended by Lord Derwentwater.

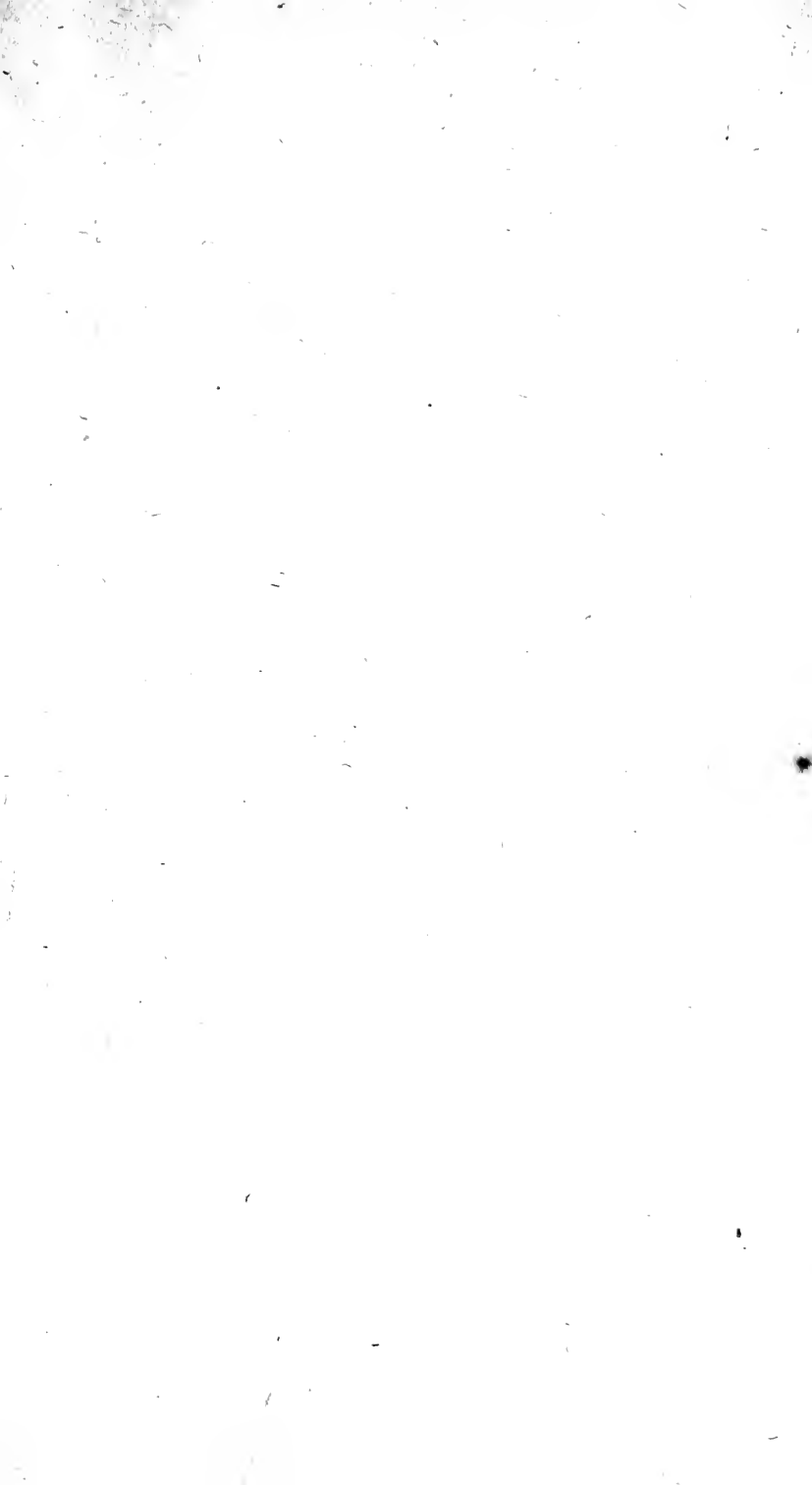
Supper being brought, it proved an agreeable one. Some happy beings surrounded the table, and those that were not so, concealed their feelings under an air of gaiety. The Duchess said she was certain her sons would soon grow weary of any country on earth but England, and she should look to their speedy return. This was spoken with tears starting to her eye. Lord Bellengen, Mr. Westburn, and Fitzroy, kept up the wit and cheerfulness of the night; it was late before they parted,



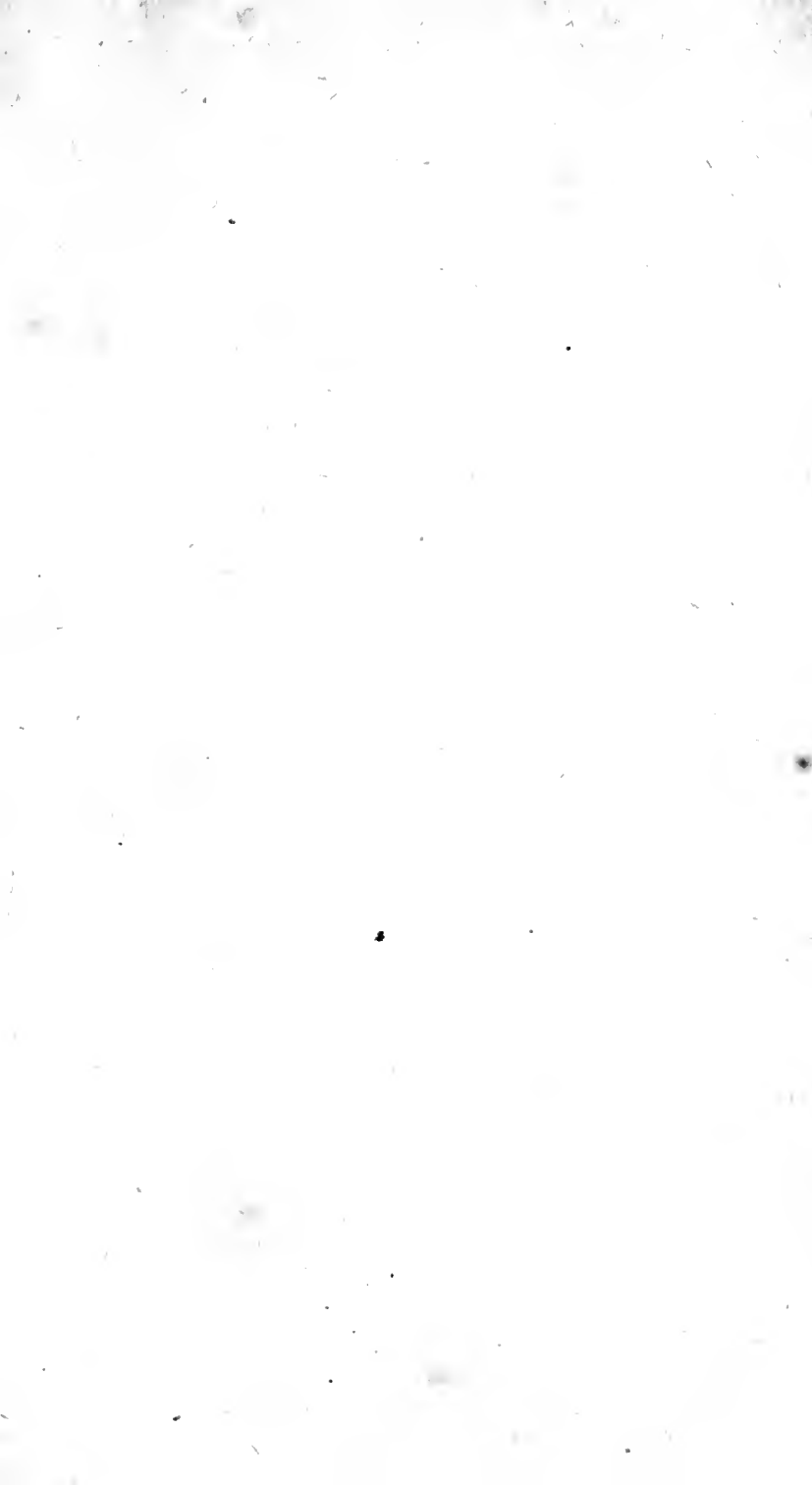
















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